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# THE QUARTERLY of the Oregon Historical Society

VOLUME XII

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EARLY NAVIGATION OF THE STRAITS  
OF FUCA<sup>1</sup>

By Judge F. W. Howay, New Westminster, B. C.

Before the third voyage of the great Captain James Cook the northwest coast of America was regarded as almost as far beyond the ordinary bounds of navigation as the islands of the Hesperides appeared to the Greeks; and Swift himself, when he composed the entertaining travels of Lemuel Gulliver, esteeming it the proper region of fable and romance selected it for the position of the imaginary land of Brobdingnag.

The narrow strait of Juan de Fuca gives entrance to the most extensive and most beautiful labyrinth of waterways to be found on the whole coast; through it passes today a constantly growing volume of trade as the population of the neighboring states and the western portion of Canada increases; and as it forms a part of the international boundary line, the story of its early navigators must be of equal interest to the citizens of both countries, and of especial interest to the students of the history of the coast.

In the argument upon the San Juan question George Bancroft, the United States representative, speaking of these waters, says: "The emoluments of the fur-trade; the Spanish "jealousy of Russian encroachments down the Pacific Coast;

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<sup>1</sup>Paper read before the Annual Meeting of the members of the Oregon Historical Society, December 17, 1910.

"the lingering hope of discovering a northwest passage; the British desire of finding water communication from the Pacific to the great lakes; the French passion for knowledge; the policy of Americans to investigate their outlying possessions; all conspired to cause more frequent and more thorough examinations of these waters even before 1846, than of any similarly situated waters in any part of the globe."

On the Atlantic coast, as by degrees geographical knowledge was extended, the belief in the existence of a northwest passage gradually tottered to its fall; but myths die hard; and the possibility of such a passage being found from the Pacific side held firm sway until almost a hundred years ago. Indeed it is common knowledge that in 1745 the British Parliament offered a reward of £20,000 for its discovery, and one of the objects of Captain Cook's third expedition was to seek it out.

On Sunday the 22nd March, 1778, Captain Cook, the first European of whom we have any authentic record, discovered the southern entrance of the strait of Juan de Fuca which he named Cape Flattery, because as he states in his Voyage, there "appeared a small opening which flattered us with the hopes of finding an harbour".

Unfortunately he was unable to examine this opening, as owing to a heavy gale having arisen he was obliged to stand out to sea, and so missed the opportunity of making a discovery which would have added lustre to a name even as great as his.

It may be objected that Juan de Fuca, the old Greek pilot had preceded Cook by almost two hundred years, and that he was "the first and original" discoverer of Cape Flattery and the Strait of Fuca. I do not at this time intend to examine his story as preserved to us in Michael Lock's note in Purchas, His Pilgrimes. The subject is gone into very fully in Bancroft's History of the North West Coast, Vol. I., pp. 70-81, and after a minute examination the conclusion is reached that the alleged voyage is a fiction, pure and simple. I accept the view of the late Elwood Evans, who in his History of the Pacific North West, says: "No record is preserved in Spain



"or Mexico mentioning the voyage or him who is asserted to have made it, or that in any way contributes color of truthfulness to the Lock narrative. Its inconsistencies are patent, are glaring. The land described, the natives, the alleged elements of wealth, the location of the strait, its extent, coast line, internal navigation, indeed every peculiarity of the Strait of Juan de Fuca and its surroundings repel the belief that the inventor of Lock's statement could ever have seen or visited the North-west coast of America".

I think that Professor Davidson has expressed the almost unanimous opinion of students with regard to the Fuca story in his curt finding: "The whole story is a fabrication".

Perhaps I should pause here to notice a claim made by Spain to the discovery of the Strait of Fuca. I quote from the first chapter of the "*Relacion del viage hecho por las goletas Sutil y Mexicana en el ano 1792*", as follows:

"Sub-Lieutenant Don Esteban Martinez, being at Nootka, after having taken possession of that port in the name of Her Majesty, stated that, in 1774, in returning from his expedition to the north, he thought he saw a very wide entrance at 48° 20' latitude. Believing that it might be that of Fuca, he directed a second mate (piloto) in command of the schooner Gertrudis to ascertain whether that entrance existed or not. The mate returned, saying that he had found it to be twenty-one miles wide, and its centre in 48° 30' latitude, 19° 28' west of San Blas".

Of the voyage of Juan Perez in 1774, we have more accounts than of any other contemporary expedition, no less than four distinct diaries being extant. Of these, two, a *relacion del viage*, and *tabla diaria*, are by Perez himself; the others are by the missionaries Crespi and Peña, whose duties especially included the keeping of diaries of the voyage. If Martinez thought he saw the strait in 1774, he kept the suspicion closely concealed in his own bosom, for in not one of these four independent accounts is even the least hint of such a thing given.

In his *Breve discurso de los descubrimientos de America* Martinez says that he saw in his voyage of 1774 with Juan Perez, a wide entrance about  $48^{\circ} 30'$ , which he considered to be, either the strait of Juan de Fuca, or of Aguilar, which ought in his opinion to connect with Hudson's Bay.

Campos in his *Espana en California*, page 4, adds that Martinez on his return from Nootka in 1789, said that the pilot Narvaez had "*encontrado de nuevo*" the strait of Juan de Fuca.

In Humboldt's *Essai Politique sur le Royaume de la Nouvelle-Espagne*, volume 2, page 489, after speaking of Malaspina's wish to examine the coast beyond Nootka, he says: "Le vice-roi, doué d'un esprit actif et entreprenant, céda d'autant plus facilement a ce désir, que de nouveaux renseignements donnés par des officiers stationnés a Noutka sembloient rendre probable l'existence d'un canal dont on attribuoit la découverte au pilote grec Juan de Fuca, depuis la fin du seizieme siecle. En effet, Martinez, en 1774, avoit reconnu une entrée tres-large sous les  $48^{\circ} 20'$  de latitude. Le pilote de la goelette Gertrudis, l'enseigne Don Manuel Quimper, qui commandoit la bélandre la Princesse Royale, et, en 1791, le capitaine Elisa, avoient visté successivement cette entrée; ils y avoient meme découvert des ports surs et "spacieux".

As far as I can ascertain these are the only references to this strait having been seen by the Spaniards prior to 1790. It will be noticed that Humboldt's statement, which is the latest in point of time, is the strongest. The *Viage*, which was an official publication by the Spanish Government, says that in 1774 Martinez "thought he saw"; then Martinez himself says that in 1774 "he saw"; and lastly Humboldt says that he "avoit reconnu", the strait of Fuca. It is certainly worthy of remark that if the pilot, as Martinez was in 1774, really saw the strait so long looked for, and not simply "*thought he saw*" it—whatever that may mean,—he did not, as his duty was, report the fact to the commander of the expedition, Juan Perez.

After leaving the vicinity of Nootka in 1774, Martinez did not return to this portion of the coast until 1789. In the meantime, as will be shown later, Captain Barkley in the *Imperial Eagle*, Captain Meares in the *Felice*, Captain Duncan in the *Princess Royal*, and Captain Gray in the *Washington*, had all visited the strait of Fuca.

As Martinez in the *Princessa* left San Blas on the 17th February, 1789, arriving at Nootka 5th May; and was recalled in the fall of that year, leaving Nootka on 31st October and reaching San Blas on 6th December; it follows that any exploration made by Narvaez under his orders must have occurred between May and October. Remembering that during May, June, and July Martinez was busy seizing Meares's ships and in making an establishment at Nootka, and later in dismantling it, it may well be doubted whether he had much time to give to the question of exploration. Again, the schooner *Gertrudis* referred to, is none other than Meares's *North West America*, which was not seized until 9th June, 1789, and sailed immediately afterwards with a Spanish crew and Mr. David Coolidge of the *Washington* as pilot on a trading voyage, returning in July with seventy-five skins. From all these circumstances, I think it fair to infer that if Narvaez saw the strait of Fuca, it was not till the end of June, 1789, and was not because he was sent to explore it but because he casually fell in with it, as Campos says, while on this trading voyage. It will be noted that the fragmentary information which Martinez gives as the result of Narvaez alleged voyage was nothing more than any seaman in Meares's, Duncan's, or Gray's employ could have readily told him.

Having disposed of this apocryphal matter let us return to undisputed facts. It is well known that the fur-trade on this coast, especially the trade in sea-otter skins, had its origin in the knowledge obtained by Captain Cook, whose vessels returned to England in 1780.

*Captain Barkley's Voyage in the Imperial Eagle.*

The first of the fur-trading vessels of which I wish to speak is the *Imperial Eagle*. Her voyage is interesting for three reasons; first, the vessel herself was the *Loudoun*, her name being changed when she was placed under the Austrian flag, in order to avoid the monopoly of the East India Company; second, her captain Charles William Barkley was the real discoverer of the strait of Juan de Fuca; and third, his wife Frances Hornby Barkley was the first white woman to visit this part of our coast and to see the strait of Fuca.

As I have already mentioned, the original name of the *Imperial Eagle* was the *Loudoun*. She was a fine merchant vessel of 400 tons, ship-rigged and mounting twenty guns. Captain George Dixon of the *Queen Charlotte* describes her as "a good-sailing, coppered vessel."

At that time, indeed up till 1833, the East India Company, which was practically an arm of the British Government, had a monopoly of trade in the South Seas, in which term this coast was included. That monopoly, originally created by Queen Elizabeth and repeatedly confirmed by Parliament under succeeding monarchs, was of course, only effective as against British vessels and British subjects. To avoid it, the owners of the *Loudoun*, who were themselves British, and in the employ of the East India Company, hit upon the idea of changing the vessel from the British to the Austrian flag. I may add, parenthetically, that the vessel was not owned by the Austrian East India Company as is often stated. Indeed, there was no such company in existence.

The change of flag and of name was accomplished at Ostend in Belgium, where the vessel remained some eight weeks, fitting out for the voyage. Captain Barkley, a young man of twenty-seven years, who was in command, found time in this interval to cultivate the acquaintance of Miss Frances Hornby Trevor, the seventeen-year-old daughter of an English clergyman residing there. So successful was he, that the couple were

married on 27th October, 1786, and Mrs. Barkley sailed with her husband from Ostend in the Loudoun, alias Imperial Eagle, on a trading voyage to the North-west coast and China, which was to be one of a series covering about ten years.

Captain Barkley's log of the Imperial Eagle up to his arrival at Nootka is in the possession of the Honorable Mr. Justice Martin in Victoria; but the subsequent log, with his plans and charts, passed into the hands of his owners and Captain John Meares, as will be hereafter related, and has disappeared. But fortunately for local history, Mrs. Barkley kept a diary, which was until a few years ago in the possession of her grand-son, the late Captain Edward Barkley, R. N., at Westholm, B. C. It is to that diary I am indebted for the particulars of this voyage. Students of the history of the coast must have noted the paucity of printed information concerning the voyage of the Imperial Eagle.

The Imperial Eagle arrived at Nootka, the Mecca of all coast traders, in June, 1787. Soon after anchoring there, a canoe came alongside, and Mrs. Barkley was much surprised when a man, in every respect like an Indian—and a very dirty one at that—clothed in a dirty sea-otter skin stepped aboard and introduced himself as Dr. John Mackey late surgeon of the trading brig, Captain Cook. During the month the Imperial Eagle remained at Nootka, Captain Barkley, with the aid of Mackey, so swept the sound of sea-otter skins, that when the Prince of Wales and the Princess Royal, commanded by Captains Colnett and Duncan arrived, they found the trade worthless.

From Nootka the Imperial Eagle sailed southward, discovering Clayoquot sound and the sound we now call Barkley sound. Mrs. Barkley's diary says: "We anchored in a snug harbour in the sound, of which my husband made a plan as far as his knowledge of it would permit. The anchorage was off a large village and therefore we named the island, Village island." This is now known as Effingham island. Some time was spent here, a "very successful trade" carried on, and a

considerable number of points and islands named—amongst others, Cape Beale, at the southern entrance to Barkley sound, and by some regarded as the northern entrance of the Strait of Juan de Fuca.

Leaving Barkley sound on a July day in 1787, Captain Barkley discovered that afternoon the opening we now call the Strait of Fuca. I quote from Mrs. Barkley's diary:

"In the afternoon, to our great astonishment, we arrived off  
"a large opening extending to the eastward, the entrance of  
"which appeared to be about four leagues wide, and remained  
"about that width as far as the eye could see, with a clear  
"easterly horizon, which my husband immediately recognized  
"as the long lost strait of Juan de Fuca, and to which he gave  
"the name of the original discoverer, my husband placing it  
"on his chart".

The statement in Meares's *Voyage*, page LV., that the whole of Captain Barkley's voyage below Barkley sound was made in the ship's boat is absolutely incorrect. It may hardly be necessary to add that this is by no means the only error which exists in Meares's published volume.

Captain Barkley did not examine the opening or explore the strait at all, so his opinion as to its original discovery by the old Greek pilot is merely superficial.

The *Imperial Eagle* proceeded along the coast and in latitude 47° 43', on a river supposed to be the Ohahlat, near Destruction island, in attempting to trade with the natives, the mate, Mr. Miller, the purser, Mr. Beale, and four seamen were murdered. After this loss, Captain Barkley proceeded as far as Cape Fear, and thence sailed to China. This ends his connection with our subject, for although he returned in 1792, in the brig *Halcyon*, that voyage had to do only with the Alaskan coast.

Before Captain Barkley finally passes off our little stage it may be of interest to give verbatim from Mrs. Barkley's diary her side of the difficulty which occurred between her husband and the owners of the *Imperial Eagle*. She says:



“The facts are these: My husband was appointed to the Lou-  
“doun, since named Imperial Eagle, and engaged to perform  
“in her three voyages from the East Indies to Japan, Kam-  
“schatka, and the unknown coast of North America, for which  
“he was to have the sum of £3000. His owners were super-  
“cargoes in China in the service of the East India Company,  
“and several of the owners were directors at home. On my  
“husband’s arrival in China, the owners found they were not  
“warranted in trading to China and the North West Coast even  
“under the Austrian flag, the change being well known and for  
“what purpose, so they found themselves through fear of losing  
“their own situations obliged to sell the ship to avoid worse  
“consequences. They then wanted to get off their bargain  
“with my husband, who, having made provision according to  
“the original contract, made in London, would have been  
“actually a loser to the sum of thousands of pounds, after  
“making upwards of £10,000 for the owners since he had been  
“in command, besides the loss of time and great expense in-  
“curred by our journey to England from Bengal.

“Captain Barkley therefore brought an action for damages,  
“but before the case came into court at Calcutta, the affair was  
“compromised by an arbitration of merchants, and my hus-  
“band was awarded £5,000. The whole transaction was the  
“most arbitrary assumption of power ever known, for the  
“owners and agents not only dismissed Captain Barkley from  
“the ship, but appropriated all the fittings and stores laid in by  
“my husband for the term agreed upon, which would have  
“taken at least ten years, for on the second and third voyages  
“he was to winter on the Northwest coast and, with the furs  
“collected, trade to the unfrequented parts of China, wherever  
“he thought furs would sell for the highest figure. Of course  
“my husband had supplied himself with the best and most ex-  
“pensive nautical instruments and charts, also stores of every  
“kind for such an adventurous voyage. A great portion of the  
“latter were obliged to be expended for owners’ use, who had  
“not laid in sufficient stores for such a voyage, and then these

"people actually pretended Captain Barkley was bound to furnish them, and in their first claim actually brought him apparently in debt to the concern! However, when the contract between Captain Barkley and the owners was investigated, justice, though to a small extent, prevailed, and he was awarded the sum of £5,000 as I have previously stated. My husband left the vessel with the remaining stores on board, and these articles fraudulently obtained from him were transferred to Captain Meares, who was in the same employ though not acknowledged to be so".

*Meares's Explorations in the Vicinity of Fuca Strait.*

The next navigator to see the strait of Fuca was the well-known Captain John Meares. Meares's name is written large in the history of our coast. He was the first land owner in British Columbia; he built the first vessel on this coast north of Mexico, the historic North West America; he failed to find the Columbia river, and actually recorded its non-existence; the publication of his account of his voyages caused a most acrimonious discussion between himself and Captain George Dixon, late of the Queen Charlotte; and his trading adventure brought the British nation to the verge of war with Spain.

Meares left Wicananish, i.e., Clayoquot sound, on the Felice, during the night of the 28th June, 1788, and steering east south east arrived on the morning of the 29th abreast of Barkley sound. Passing by, greatly to the chagrin of the natives, he held the same course along the shore of Vancouver island until "at noon the latitude was  $48^{\circ} 39'$  north, at which time we had a complete view of an inlet, whose entrance appeared very extensive, bearing E. S. E., distant about six leagues. We endeavored to keep in with the shore as much as possible, in order to have a perfect view of the land. This was an object of particular anxiety, as the part of the coast along which we were now sailing had not been seen by Captain Cook; and we knew of no other navigator said to have been this way except Maurelle; and his chart which we had on board, convinced us

"that he had either never seen this part of the coast, or that "he had purposely misrepresented it".

I pause here to note that this statement is not ingenuous ; perhaps a stronger, Anglo-Saxon expression would be more apt. Meares then knew that Captain Barkley had been in that very locality the preceding year. This is shown by the statement on page LV of his introductory remarks. There in speaking of Captain Barkley, Meares says that he "explored that part of "the coast from Nootka to Wicananish, and so on to a sound, "to which he gave his own name. The boat's crew, however, "was dispatched and discovered the extraordinary straits of "John de Fuca, and also the coast as far as Queenhythe."

Some friend of Meares or some believer in his truthfulness, may suggest that he only learned the facts about Barkley's voyage after he had made his own examination of the coast. Not so. Mrs. Barkley's diary shows that the Imperial Eagle reached Macao in December, 1787, remaining there to dispose of the furs until February, 1788. Meares was then fitting out at the same port for this coast, for which he sailed in February, 1788, so that he had ample opportunity to learn of Captain Barkley's movements here ; and that he did in fact know of them is plain from his statement on page 124 in connection with the murder of Mr. Miller and the boat's crew near Destruction island. He says there that "we saw a seal hanging from the ear of one of "the men in the canoe which was known to have belonged to "the unfortunate Mr. Miller of the Imperial Eagle, whose melancholy history was perfectly well known to every one on "board." And again on page 158, when nearing Queenhythe, he says: "We were approaching the place where and the people by whom the crew of the boat belonging to the Imperial "Eagle were massacred." And to clinch the matter, Dixon in his Remarks, which are in the form of a letter to Meares, says that John Henry Cox, at whose house Meares stayed while fitting out at Macao, "gave you a copy of Barclay's chart from "Nootka Sound to the south ward as far or nearly so as you "went." This Meares in his reply did not deny.

Let us now resume Meares's story. By three o'clock in the afternoon of the 29th June, the *Felice* arrived at the entrance of this great inlet, "which appeared," he says, "to be twelve or fourteen leagues abroad." It is in fact but twelve or fifteen miles in width. Could Meares not tell the difference between twelve miles, and twelve leagues? Or did he stretch the width to tally more nearly with de Fuca's story to Lock that the strait was thirty or forty leagues wide? Or was it merely an effort of his fertile imagination, like his statement that de Fuca had noted the Indian habit of flattening the head?

The Voyage goes on to say: "From the mast-head it was "observed to stretch to the East by North and a clear and unbounded horizon was seen in this direction as far as the eye "could reach."

Meares crossed to the southern shore and stood in for Cape Flattery. At a distance of about two miles, the *Felice* was hove to, while the long boat was manned to search for an anchorage between Tatoоче island and Cape Flattery. Here Meares made the acquaintance of Tatoоче, the Chief of the Clallam Indians, whose name stands side by side with those of Maquilla and Callicum in the early annals of the coast. You all remember Meares's description of Tatoоче—"so surly and forbidding a character we had not yet seen"—"of savage and frightful appearance",—"barbarous and subtle". Four years later when the *Sutil* and *Mexicana* entered the strait, they met Tatoоче, whom they called Tetacus, and engaged him as pilot. They call him "our friend Tetacus", and speak of him as "exceedingly friendly",—as "never belying his frankness and confidence",—and as being "very intelligent and well-behaved". Did the character of Tatoоче alter in the interval, or is Meares wrong again?

Meares goes on to say: "The strongest curiosity impelled "us to enter this strait, which we shall call by the name of its "original discoverer, Juan de Fuca". Did the fact that Meares had in his possession Barkley's chart with this name already applied to the strait, aid him in selecting that name? It was

after leaving the strait on this occasion that Meares failed to find the Columbia river, and in token of his feelings named Cape Disappointment.

The *Felice* returned to Barkley sound, and anchored there while the long boat under Mr. Duffin, the first officer of the *Felice*, was sent out to explore the strait of Fuca. Leaving the sound on the 13th July, 1788, Mr. Duffin entered the strait, attempted to trade with the natives, was attacked by them, and returned at the end of five days. His journal shows that he had coasted along the Vancouver island shore, and barely entered the strait—in fact that he had only reached a point near Gordon river in the bay now known as Port San Juan—when this attack occurred and his retreat commenced. Yet Meares, on page 179, has the audacity to state that the long boat had on this occasion, “sailed near thirty leagues up the strait, and at that distance from the sea it was about fifteen leagues broad with a clear horizon stretching to the East for fifteen leagues more”. Nothing of that kind is stated in the journal. Captain Dixon in his *Further Remarks on Meares*, scores him heavily for this misrepresentation, “not to call it by a harder name”, and in closing his remarks on the subject, adds: “Be so good, Mr. Meares, as to inform me how you reconcile this difference between the master of the boat’s journal and your own account, for I am free to confess, I cannot possibly do it”.

Meares claims to have taken possession of the strait of Fuca for the King of Britain, with the usual ceremonies. As he himself was never in the strait, and never on land any nearer thereto than Barkley sound, and as Mr. Duffin’s journal mentions no such incident, this statement may be put into the already over-burdened collection of Meares apocrypha.

Before we part from Captain Meares, as he never again visited the strait, let me quote once more from Mrs. Barkley’s diary:

“In the same manner as he got the stores, Captain Meares got possession of my husband’s journal and plans from the

"persons in China to whom he was bound under a penalty of £5,000 to give them up for a certain time for, as these persons stated, mercantile objects, they not wishing the knowledge of the coast to be published. Captain Meares however, with the greatest effrontery, published and claimed the merit of my husband's discoveries therein contained, besides inventing lies of the most revolting nature tending to vilify the persons he thus pilfered. No cause could be assigned either by Captain Barkley or myself, for this animosity except the wish of currying favor with the late agents and owners of the Loudoun named the Imperial Eagle, these persons having quarrelled with Captain Barkley in consequence of his claiming on his discharge a just demand".

In connection with this statement by Mrs. Barkley it is quite plain that Meares himself placed great stress on keeping secret the knowledge of the coast while he was operating here. This is evident from the instructions given by him to Captain Colnett and Captain Douglas, which are to be found in the appendix to his volume.

### *The First Voyage of the Princess Royal.*

The next navigator, visiting the strait of Fuca, was a contemporary of both Barkley and Meares, who, though the first to sail for this coast, was the last to see the strait.

This was Captain Charles Duncan of the sloop Princess Royal, fifty tons burden, manned by fifteen men. This vessel, with her consort the Prince of Wales, under Captain James Colnett, afterwards prominent in the Meares embroglio, sailed from London in September, 1786, and after calling at Staten island, arrived at Nootka in July, 1787. Captain Barkley in the Imperial Eagle, with the aid of Mackey, having already gathered in all the sea-otter skins in that vicinity, the two vessels, after making a few repairs, left Nootka. Off the entrance of the sound, on the 8th August, 1787, they met the Queen Charlotte, owned by the same people, Messrs. Etches & Co., of London. On Captain Dixon's advice the remainder of the sea-



son of 1787 was spent at Queen Charlotte islands where a large number of skins were obtained.

As was usual in the fur-trade, the winter of 1787 was spent by Duncan and Colnett at the Sandwich islands. On their return in the spring the commanders separated,—Duncan returning to Queen Charlotte islands and the vicinity. He spent the summer amongst the group of islands to the east of Queen Charlotte islands to which he gave the name of Princess Royal isles, after his vessel.

Sailing from Safety cove, Calvert island, on the 2nd August, 1788, Captain Duncan arrived off Nootka on 6th. Meares, lying at anchor there, recognized the Princess Royal, and, while in one breath saying he felt not “the most distant impulse of any miserable consideration arising from a competition of interests”, yet in the next he states that he “became very apprehensive that she might reach Wicananish before us and be able to tempt that chief by the various articles of novelty on board her to intrude upon the treaty (of monopoly of trade) he had made with us. We therefore did not delay a moment to sail” for Clayoquot sound. On the way Meares hailed the Princess Royal and went aboard. He speaks in tones of wonderment that a vessel so small should have rounded Cape Horn and navigated the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans for twenty months in safety, reflecting great credit on the ability and indefatigable spirit of her commander.

The vessels separated in the fog. The Princess Royal reached Ahousat, Clayoquot sound, on the evening of 8th, and was busy trading with the Indians when Meares passed her, bound inwards for Port Cox.

On the 13th August, Duncan left Ahousat and on the 15th anchored before the village of Claaset on the south side of the straits of Fuca, about two miles east of Cape Flattery. Here he stayed trading with the natives until the 17th when he left the coast, “which I should not have done so soon”, he says, “but that I had an appointment to meet the Prince of Wales on “a certain day at the Sandwich isles in order to go in company “together to China.”

As far as I know, the only records we have of Captain Duncan's movements on this coast are the casual references to him in Mrs. Barkley's diary, in Meares's, Portlock's, and Dixon's published volumes, the letter written by him to Dixon, contained in Dixon's Further Remarks on Meares, and his chart of the strait of Fuca, which was published by Dalrymple, January 14th, 1790. That chart contains the first published information concerning this strait. The chart covers from Barkley sound to a point near Jordan river, showing the strait to be about fourteen miles wide, and indicating the positions of Pachena bay, Carmanah point, Port San Juan, Neah bay, and Clallam bay. Although it was the middle of August when he was there, Duncan tells us that the weather was very unsettled. He goes on: "The Indians of Claaset said that they knew not "of any land to the Eastward; that it was *A'ass toopulse*, which "signifies a great sea. They pointed that the sea ran "a great way up to the Northward; and down to the South- "ward; on the East side, they likewise said that at a great "distance to the Southward, I should find men that had guns, "as well as I had; whether they meant that to frighten me or "not I can not tell, for all along the coast, I never found any "that wished to part with us or indeed wished us to trade with "another nation, telling us that they were the only people that "had anything or were worth trading with". He adds that they are expert whalers.

The chart also contains this note: "A small rock above water, about the size of a canoe lyes N. 19° E. from Tatooche's Island at the distance of 1½ mile. I sounded ½ a mile to the Northward of it and had no bottom at 90 fathoms". Captain Vancouver, in 1792, named this rock Duncan Rock, after its discoverer; but for that the name of Duncan is not preserved on our coast.

Duncan did not penetrate the strait beyond Claaset, but he was the first person to give to the world any really definite information about this strait.

*The First Voyage of the Washington.*

We now come to the consideration of the first voyage of the Columbia and the Washington, and of the work of the latter in the vicinity of the strait of Fuca.

These two vessels—the first representatives of the American flag in the fur-trade on this coast—were fitted out at Boston, and sailed thence on 1st October, 1787. The Columbia, a ship of 212 tons, was commanded by Captain John Kendrick; the Washington, the sloop of 90 tons, by the famous Captain Robert Gray. The Washington reached Nootka on 16th September, 1788. Meares was in port at the time and seeing the sail in the offing, sent out the long boat to her assistance, thinking her the Princess Royal. He was surprised when the boat returned towing into the harbor the American sloop Washington, instead of the British sloop Princess Royal. The Columbia arrived about a week later.

As far as our subject is concerned the Washington is the important vessel, on this first voyage. It is claimed that she was the first vessel to navigate the strait of Fuca and to circumnavigate Vancouver island. This claim is based on Meares's map showing "the sketch of the track of the American sloop Washington in the autumn 1789", and on the statements in his *Observations on the Probable Existence of a North West Passage*, page LVI. He there says:

"The Washington entered the straits of John de Fuca, the "knowledge of which she had obtained from us; and penetrating up them, entered into an extensive sea, where she steered "to the Northward and Eastward, and had communication with "the various tribes who inhabit the shores of the numerous "islands that are situated at the back of Nootka Sound, and "speak with some little variation the language of the Nootkan "people. The track of this vessel is marked on the map, and "is of great moment, as it now completely ascertains that "Nootka Sound and the parts adjacent, are islands, and comprehended within the Great Northern Archipelago. The sea also "which is seen to the East, is of great extent; and it is from

"this stationary point, and the most westerly parts of Hudson's Bay, that we form an estimate of the distance between them. "The most Easterly direction of the Washington's course is "to the longitude of  $237^{\circ}$  East of Greenwich. It is probable, "however, that the master of that vessel did not make any "astronomical observations to give a just data of that station. . . ." And on page LXII, in arguing the existence of a north west passage he says: "And, finally, we offer the "proofs brought by the Washington, which sailed through a "sea that extends upwards of eight degrees of latitude."

This is all Meares has to say; this is the basis of all that has been written on the subject. No other contemporaneous writer mentions such a voyage. No further basis, no other evidence in support, has ever been found by any investigator into the question. *Its only foundation is Meares.*

The story has been frequently mentioned by subsequent writers, but their statements show plainly that they rely on Meares. Thus Elwood Evans, in *History of the Pacific North West*, says on page 50:

"In the fall of 1789, after parting with the Columbia, Captain Kendrick in the sloop Washington, sailed through the "strait of Juan de Fuca. Steering Northward he passed through "some eight degrees of latitude and came out into the Pacific "Ocean north of latitude fifty-five degrees north".

And so, in Anderson's brochure, *Did the Louisiana Purchase extend to the Pacific Ocean?* page 6: "Meanwhile Kendrick in the Washington made further explorations, and preceded all Europeans in passing through the straits of Juan "de Fuca from one end to the other".

During the heated times of the Oregon Question—"54° 40' or Fight"—this claim came prominently forward; and it was resurrected in the San Juan dispute. Both these questions have long been settled; the subject is now demagnetized; and we can touch and examine it without fear of a shock.

Let us get clearly in mind the situation with regard to the Washington. Captain Gray was in command from the time

she left Boston, until about the end of July, 1789, when Captain Kendrick took charge, and Gray sailed for China in the Columbia with the furs obtained by both vessels. From China the Columbia sailed to Boston arriving, as every one knows, in August, 1790, and being the first vessel to bear the Stars and Stripes around the world. Kendrick remained on this coast in the Washington until the latter part of 1789, when he also left for China, arriving there with a valuable cargo of furs on the 26th January, 1790.

Hence this voyage, if made at all, must have been made, if by Gray, prior to the end of July, 1789; and if by Kendrick, between July and October, 1789.

Dealing first with the possibility of its having been made by Captain Gray. There is in the Public Library in Portland a copy of Hlaswell's log, giving an account of voyage of the Washington under his command up till about the middle of June, 1789, and for the present it is sufficient to say that it gives no support to any such claim. But further we have the conclusive testimony of Captain Gray himself, as recorded by Vancouver, who met him near the strait of Fuca in April, 1792: "It is not possible to conceive any person to be more astonished than was Mr. Gray on his being made acquainted that his authority had been quoted and the track pointed out that he had been said to have made in the sloop Washington. In contradiction to which he assured the officers that he had penetrated only fifty miles into the straits in question in an E. S. E. direction; that he found the passage five leagues wide; and that he understood from the natives that the opening extended a considerable distance to the northward; that this was all the information he had acquired respecting this inland sea, and that he had returned into the ocean by the same way he had entered". See Vancouver's Voyage, Vol. I, pages 42-3.

I will deal later with this statement of Captain Gray. Let us now consider the possibility of this alleged voyage of the Washington having been made while in command of Kendrick, after Gray's departure.

Unfortunately, all of Kendrick's journals and records disappeared when, after his death, the *Washington* was lost at sea; but we have negative testimony in the fact that when Kendrick's heirs applied to Congress for relief on the ground of his public services no suggestion of his having explored the strait of Fuca or circumnavigated Vancouver island was made. In considering this matter it must be remembered that 1789 was the year of the seizure of Meares's vessels, and that early that year the Spaniards had formed a settlement at Nootka, whence they watched with eagle eye the movements of the ships upon the coast. If any such voyage as stated by Meares had been made they must surely have been aware of it. Yet Vancouver tells us (Vol. I, p. 318, 4 to ed.), that Galiano and Valdes, the Spanish commanders whom he met in the Gulf of Georgia in June, 1792, informed him: "That notwithstanding the Spaniards had lived upon terms of great intimacy with Mr. Gray and other American traders at Nootka, they had no knowledge of any person having performed such a voyage but from the history of it published in England"—referring of course to Meares's statement.

That this is correct is shown by the fact that in 1790, 1791, and 1792, three separate expeditions were sent out by the Spaniards from Nootka to explore the strait of Fuca and ascertain where it terminated. He goes on to say that Senor Valdes, who spoke the Indian language fluently, understood from the natives that the inlet did communicate with the ocean to the northward. A vague idea that what we call Vancouver island was either a large island or a chain of islands was current among the fur-traders from the earliest times; thus Captain Barkley mentions that Mackey, whom he found at Nootka, as already stated, thought that the country around Nootka sound was not a part of the continent of North America, but a chain of detached islands; and see Haswell's log to the same effect.

Vancouver claims for himself and Quadra the honor of the first circumnavigation of Vancouver island, or as he calls it



“the tract of land that had first been circumnavigated by us”,—the island of Quadra and Vancouver. The first edition of Vancouver’s Voyage appeared in 1798. At that time Kendrick was dead; but Gray was alive until 1806. If Vancouver’s claims clashed with either Gray’s or Kendrick’s actual work, it is reasonable to suppose that Gray would have been heard from on the point.

The view of subsequent writers on the question of this voyage are only valuable as the opinions of experts.

In 1840, when Greenhow published his *Memoir, Historical and Political, on the North West Coast of North America*, in speaking of this alleged voyage, after stating that it was in his opinion an exaggeration by Meares of Gray’s explorations in the strait of Fuca, he goes on to say on page 92: “The account that such a voyage had been made was incorrect; but “Captain Gray collected information from the natives of the “coasts, which left no doubt on his mind that the passage communicated northward of Nootka with the Pacific by an opening to which he had in the summer of 1789 given the names of “Pintard’s Sound, but which is now generally called Queen “Charlotte Sound. This opinion was verified in 1792 by Vancouver and Galiano and Valdes”. As Librarian of the Department of State Greenhow had in his possession (see the footnote on page 89 of the *Memoir*) conclusive proof that this voyage had never been actually made.

Yet despite this published opinion of 1840 and the possession of this conclusive proof to the contrary, we find Greenhow in his *History of Oregon*, 1846, pages 216-219, arguing that the voyage may have been made, and that this is the one statement of Meares which can be relied on. I place the contradiction before you. I do not attempt to explain it.

Professor Meany simply states the uncertainty prevailing on the point, with apparently a slight inclination to doubt that the voyage was ever made. See Meany’s *Vancouver’s Discovery of Puget Sound*, pages 32-33.

In volume 12 of the Pacific Railroad Reports, published in 1860, by the United States Government, is a geographical memoir upon the strait of Fuca and the vicinity by the well-known geographer, J. G. Kohl, of the United States Coast Survey, perhaps the best-posted man of his day on all such matters pertaining to this coast. On page 274 of that memoir he says: "Greenhow believes that soon after Gray, the American, Captain Kendrick sailed through the whole strait (of Fuca) and came out at Queen Charlotte's sound, but this can not be proved by historical documents".

Bancroft in his History of the North West Coast, volume I, page 208, speaking of Kendrick and this alleged voyage, says: "I can not say that such was not the fact; but from the extreme inaccuracy of Meares's chart, from the narrowness of the real channel, and from the fact that Kendrick is not known to have made subsequently any claims to a discovery so important, I am strongly of opinion that the chart was made from second-hand reports of Kendrick's conjectures, founded on Gray's explorations of the north and south, supplemented by his own possible observations after Gray's departure, as well as by reports of the natives which, according to Haswell, indicated a channel back of Nootka". Bancroft's opinion is very close to the fact.

Of all the public men prominently connected with the Oregon Question, there was probably none better able or more competent to express an opinion on this voyage than Albert Gallatin. He was one of the representatives of the United States in the negotiation of treaty of joint policy in 1818, and of the renewal treaty of 1827. Rush's *Residence at the Court of London* shows how carefully the voyages to this coast were scrutinized in the official discussion of the question. Of these negotiations Gallatin could certainly say in the language of Virgil, "Quorum pars magna fui". In his second Letter on the Oregon Question in January, 1846, he says:

"The pretended voyage of the sloop Washington through-out the straits under the command of either Gray or Kendrick has no other foundation than an assertion of Meares, on which no reliance can be placed".

In the reply of the United States in the San Juan dispute George Bancroft refers to this alleged voyage of the Washington: "We know", he says, "alike from British and from Spanish authorities, that an American sloop, fitted out at Boston in New England, and commanded by Captain Kendrick, passed through the straits of Fuca just at the time when the American Constitution went into operation—two years before Vancouver, and even before Quimper and de Haro".

The only British authority he cites in support is the passage in Meares already quoted, and a portion of Vancouver's instructions from the Admiralty reciting Meares's statements. The Spanish authority cited by him is weaker than the proverbial broken reed. It is an extract from Quimper's journal referring to the circumnavigation of Nootka island by Kendrick in the brig Washington in 1791, and not to the circumnavigation of Vancouver island by Kendrick in the sloop Washington in 1789. It is not for me to attempt to explain how this mistake occurred. I simply state the fact.

In this connection it is a strange circumstance that George Bancroft, who, in the preparation of that case, which bears on every page the marks of close and careful study and research, overlooked Ingraham's journal—a work in the Library of Congress, and constantly referred to by Greenhow. This journal contains statements which show conclusively that the Washington never made the voyage referred to by Meares.

Before I deal with Ingraham's journal, let me point out another consideration which is opposed to the probability of such a voyage. Meares says this alleged voyage of the Washington occurred in the autumn of 1789. Now we know that on the 13th July, 1789, the Washington was lying at Nootka; that she sailed thence in company with the Columbia a few days later to Clayoquot sound; that there all the furs were put on board the Columbia, which then departed for China, arriving there 2nd November, 1789—about three and a half months after leaving this coast. The Columbia and the Washington sailed

at about the same speed, as shown by the original voyage from Boston. As the *Washington* arrived in China on the 26th January, 1790, it seems fair to say that she must have left this coast about the end of September. So that she only remained here about two months after the *Columbia* sailed, namely from the end of July to the end of September. This would almost seem without more to settle the question, as it may well be doubted whether any navigator could pioneer the way amid that labyrinth of channels from Cape Flattery to Cape Scott in such a short time, and carry on sufficient trade to obtain, as Kendrick did in that interval, a valuable cargo of furs.

I think that, after Gray's departure, Kendrick sailed in the *Washington* to Queen Charlotte Islands, and there obtained the cargo of five hundred sea otter skins. The chief at Barrell's sound told Haskins that Kendrick had been there twice, once in a one-masted ship, lately in one with two masts. See Haskins Journal, Page 51, under date July 8th, 1791. And we know that in 1789 the *Washington* was rigged as a sloop, but on her return in 1791, she was rigged as a brig. Consequently the chief's reference to Kendrick in a one-masted ship must apply to some date in 1789.

All the matters I have dealt with up to this point simply raise inferences, more or less strong, that the voyage in question was never made. But I now come to the consideration of Ingraham's journal, which as I have already said settles the question.

Joseph Ingraham, the writer of this interesting journal, was the second mate of the *Columbia* on her first voyage. He went to China in her, and thence returned to Boston. There he left the *Columbia*, and took charge of the brig *Hope*, in which he sailed for this coast again on the 16th September, 1790, arriving here 1st June, 1791. He was engaged in the fur-trade on this coast in 1791 and 1792. Subsequently he joined the United States navy, and was lost in the U. S. brig *Pickering*, which was never heard of after leaving Delaware in August, 1800.

In volume 4, page 206, of that journal, a copy of which I have obtained through the kindness of C. F. Newcomb, M. D., of Victoria, Ingraham, after stating that the charts therein are prepared from his own observations, and those of Captains Gray and Douglas, goes on to say that the dotted line shown thereon connecting the strait of Fuca and Queen Charlotte sound is marked from certain information that such a passage exists. In order to prevent his chart being compared, as Captain Dixon compared Meares's, to an old wife's butter pat, he mentions that the Chatham and Discovery and the Sutil and Mexicana had passed through this channel in the season of 1792. He states that both Captain Vancouver and the Spanish commanders had shown him their charts, but as he had not time to copy the windings of the passage, he chose to show it by a dotted line so as not to mislead, by laying down windings and turning coves he never saw. He then proceeds: "The sloop Washington, as Mr. Meares supposed, never passed through that passage; though we had little doubt of their being such passage, from the information of the Indians".

Considering that this story is founded on Meares alone, considering all the various circumstances referred to which raise inferences against it, remembering the absolute dearth of any corroboration most persons would probably conclude that the voyage had never been made; but this extract from Ingraham ends the matter.

Now, let us return to Meares, the father of this false statement, as of many others.

When Meares's volume appeared, Captain Dixon ridiculed the statement, and in his Remarks poked fun at the map with the alleged track of the Washington on it, which he said resembled nothing "so much as the mould of a good old housewife's butter pat". He then continued: "Be so good, Mr. Meares, as to inform the public from what authority you introduce this track into your chart". Meares replied that he had obtained it from "Mr. Neville, a gentleman of the most respectable character, who came home in the Chesterfield, a

ship in the service of the East India Company", and that Mr. Neville had "received the particulars of the track" from Captain Kendrick. To this Captain Dixon answered that, "Having never seen or heard of this gentleman (i.e. Mr. Neville) before, I have no right to doubt the verbal information he may have given you, neither would I have it understood that I ever did. All my thoughts on this subject are that before you suffered such a track to appear on your chart, you should have seen it delineated on paper either with latitudes and longitudes, or the vessel's run".

So that on Meares's own admission the track was put down on *second-hand information*. In the heated discussion, nothing was ever heard from Mr. Neville; we have only Meares's statement as to what was actually told him. It might almost have been concluded that Mr. Neville was a sort of masculine "Mrs. Harris", the friend of "Sairey Gamp". But further investigation leads to the conclusion that he was the first mate of the East Indiaman in which Meares returned to England.

We know from various sources that the Columbia and the Washington spent the winter of 1788-9 near Friendly Cove, Nootka sound. During that time it was discovered that Nootka was an island; as shown by the following entry in Haswell's log, under date, March 16, 1789: "The sound is navigable near 20 leagues where it again meets the sea in another outlet near as large as Nootka (i.e. Esperanza inlet) about seven leagues along shore to the westward". On Ingraham's map Nootka island is marked, "Kendrick's island"; and in his journal we find: "Massachusetts sound (Esperanza inlet) was so named by Captain Kendrick, who, I believe, was the first that ever passed through it with a vessel, but the Indians often informed us there was two ways of entering Nootka sound. Indeed, we were convinced of it from seeing canoes go out past Friendly Cove and come back down the sound". These quotations show that Kendrick circumnavigated Nootka Island.



Under all the circumstances it seems a fair assumption to say that this first mate had heard, perhaps from the sailors of the Columbia, that in 1789 Kendrick had circumnavigated the island on which the village of Nootka was situate, or had found a channel back of Nootka, and upon this small foundation the story was built by Meares. A mind which could magnify the width of the strait of Fuca from twelve miles to fifteen leagues, and could expand Duffin's trip to Port San Juan into a voyage thirty leagues up the strait of Fuca, would not be likely to find much difficulty in magnifying the circumnavigation of the island of Nootka into the circumnavigation of Vancouver island. When the story is compared with the fact the tale of our childhood about the three black crows is irresistibly brought to mind.

I might add here parenthetically that in 1862, Kendrick's name was most suitably bestowed upon an arm of Nootka sound by Captain Richards of the H. M. S. *Hecate*.

Now, to complete the matter, let us see what the records show in reference to Captain Gray's work while in command of the Washington in 1789. To this end we shall sketch briefly, from Haswell's log, the movements of the Washington after her arrival at Nootka in September, 1788.

This vessel wintered, as has already been said, in Nootka sound, remaining there until 16th March, 1789, when she sailed for Clayoquot, where she arrived the following day. Leaving Clayoquot early in the morning of the 27th March, she moved to a position just outside the harbor. The next morning she stood along very close to the shore on an E. S. E. course, and at ten o'clock the northern extremity of Barkley sound, or Company bay, as Gray called it, came into view. At mid-day Cape Flattery was seen bearing SE. by E., but to the eastward of this no land could be seen. "As we proceeded E. by S. as the coast trended," says Haswell, "I fully concluded we were in the straits of Juan de Fuca." Nitinat was passed at two o'clock that afternoon, and keeping along the northern shore of the strait, the Washington proceeded in

an almost easterly direction; but, as about 4:30 that afternoon it began to blow hard and the weather looked disagreeable, Captain Gray ran into a "deep bay", called by the natives Pachenat, and by him, Poverty cove, but which from Haswell's description and the location, must be the Port San Juan of our maps. Haswell says: "These people have seen vessels before, as they are acquainted with the effect of firearms, but they all say they never saw a vessel like ours, and I believe we are the first vessel that ever was in this port." The Felice's long boat under Mr. Duffin had been in this port in July, 1788, and in an altercation with the natives had shot one at least, so that they understood by experience the effect of firearms.

At eight o'clock in the morning of 31st March, the Washington sailed across to within half a mile of the southern shore of the strait, which she followed for about four leagues to the eastward, but learning from the Indians that there were no furs to be obtained in that direction, Captain Gray tacked across to the northern shore. Wherever this four leagues terminates marks the limit of Captain Gray's examination of the strait. Haswell says: "To have ran further up these straits "at this boisterous season of the year without any knowledge "of where we were going, or what difficulties we might meet "in this unknown sea, would have been the height of imprudence, especially as the wind was situated so we could not "return at pleasure. The straits appeared to extend their "breadth a little way above our present situation, and form "a large sea stretching to the east and no land as far as the "eye could reach."

The Washington returned once more to the southern shore, and on the following morning "the weather was moderate and clear, and we saw the sun rise clear from the horizon up the straits." That day, when about to enter Neah bay, a violent wind sprang up, and not wishing to be caught on a lee shore, Captain Gray headed for Port San Juan. On the morning of the 3rd April, he left that port again for the southern shore, entered Neah bay, but found his situation too dangerous, sailed

out of that bay, rounded Cape Flattery which, says Haswell, is "the south cape of ye straits of Juan de Fuca," and turned southward.

On the 4th April, the Washington was in latitude  $47^{\circ} 35'$ . Still proceeding southward, a heavy gale was encountered, so that the little sloop was reduced to a three-reefed mainsail and the head of the foresail, and on the 6th April, as its violence showed no sign of abating, Captain Gray determined to bear away for Fuca strait and Port San Juan. But the gale still continuing with hail and sleet, and the sea running very high, and the tide very strong, he found himself on the morning of the 9th April, close to Clayoquot. He therefore entered the harbor and anchored there.

On the 12th April, the Washington again left Clayoquot, and after some difficulties in the navigation of Barkley sound, steered for the strait of Fuca. At daylight of the 18th, the strait was open to view. At noon Cape Flattery bore E.  $\frac{3}{4}$  S. distant, 7 leagues. Haswell's log is at this point quite indefinite as to locality, but it seems that the vessel kept along the Washington shore, south of Cape Flattery, during the early hours of the 19th, and lay to off a village to the southward of Foggy rocks (now known as Umatilla reef), where a considerable number of good sea-otter skins were purchased at the rate of five iron chisels per skin. At noon on the 19th the latitude was  $48^{\circ} 1' N$ . The morning of the 20th saw the Washington once more in the vicinity of Tatooche island. The incoming tide set so strong, says Haswell, "that though it was calm all the succeeding night we were hurried into the straits." He continues: "At daylight several canoes came off and upwards "of 30 sea-otter skins were purchased, but we had the mortification to see them carry off near 70 others, all of excellent "quality, for want of chisels to purchase them, and they repeatedly told us they had great abundance on shore." Haswell does not indicate the situation of the vessel at this time, but at any rate it must have been near Tatooche island, perhaps as far inside the strait as Neah bay. Having no chisels

left, and the Indians refusing to take other articles, the Washington bore away for Nootka, where she arrived on 22nd April, 1789.

During the absence of the Washington, Captain Kendrick had moved the Columbia to Mawinna or Kendrick's Cove, now called Marvinas bay, seven miles up the sound from Friendly Cove; and on the following day the Washington reached that spot. Haswell says: "We were greatly surprised to find the ship not ready for sea. She was now nearly a hulk; had not been graved or scarce any preparation made for sea. They had indeed landed their guns, built a good house, built a good battery, landed most of their provisions and stores, and had their blacksmith's forge erected in the house. When we arrived in the cove they were casting their balls, preparatory to grave her bottom. The smiths were immediately employed to furnish us with another cargo of chisels and all our people in refitting our vessel for sea, repairing the sails, and recruiting our stock of wood and water."

On the 3rd May, 1789, the Washington sailed once more from Nootka, but this time her prow was turned northward, and about a month was spent in the vicinity of Queen Charlotte islands, or Washington island, as Gray called them. The sloop being severely damaged in a gale, it was determined to return to Nootka. As Haswell gives no dates on the return trip after the 11th June, when the Washington was in a harbor on the west coast of Queen Charlotte islands, the exact date of her return can not be fixed, but it was probably some time after the middle of June, 1789. This short voyage was most successful, a very lucrative trade being carried on, especially on the west coast of Queen Charlotte islands on the return journey. Haswell tells us that at one place, Captain Gray obtained two hundred sea-otter skins in trade at the rate of one chisel per skin—about one-fifth of the ordinary price. By a curious error this incident has been constantly misrepresented; and it has been stated that the two hundred skins were obtained for *one iron chisel*. The fact, as stated in Haswell's log, is that the price was one chisel *each*.

The Washington remained at Nootka until after the 13th July, when she left that port in company with the Columbia for Clayoquot, where as already stated, all the furs were transferred to the Columbia, and the captains exchanged vessels, Kendrick remaining on this coast in the Washington. Why the transfer was made at Clayoquot, instead of Nootka, we can not say. Perhaps it was owing to the trouble at Nootka over the seizure of Meares's vessels. Perhaps it was one of Captain Kendrick's sudden whims. If we believe Haswell, Kendrick was subject to sudden changes of mind.

The suggestion of Greenhow on page 199, that on this occasion the Washington under Gray re-entered the strait of Fuca for a distance is pure imagination. There is not one jot or tittle of evidence to support it; on the contrary, the evidence is all the other way. The affidavit of Mr. Funter and the crew of the North West America, sworn at Canton, on 5th December, 1789, says: "The Columbia and the American sloop Washington did depart from King George's sound together, unmolested in any measure by the Spaniard. . . . That the Columbia and Washington did steer to a harbor to the southward of King George's Sound, where they separated, the Columbia returning to China and the Washington remaining on the coast." As these persons left Nootka on the Columbia, and were passengers on her on the voyage to China, and had no apparent interest in misrepresenting the facts, we may assume this statement in the absence of all evidence to the contrary to be correct.

Hence it appears that, during 1789, the only occasions on which the Washington entered the strait of Fuca were during the cruise in March and April, of which I have already given the outlines as recorded by Haswell.

All that now remains is to determine the most easterly point within the strait then reached by her. Captain John T. Walbran of the Department of Marine and Fisheries at Victoria, who is one of our best-posted and most thorough students of the early history of the coast and to whom I am greatly in-

debted for much valuable assistance in the preparation of this address, has very kindly worked out for me the daily positions of the Washington from Haswell's observations and statements. He informs me that according to Haswell's log, the vessel was, on the 31st March, off Clallam bay, some twenty-five miles east of Cape Flattery; this marks her most easterly position on the southern shore of the strait. At six o'clock that evening the Washington reached her furthest east point, being in latitude  $48^{\circ} 25' N.$  and longitude  $124^{\circ} 10' W.$  This position may be described as fifteen miles eastward of Port San Juan, or midway between Port San Juan and Sooke harbor. Thus we find by working out Haswell's log reasonable confirmation of Captain Gray's statement to Vancouver.

It is not my intention to deal with the work of the Spanish navigators, Quimper in 1790, Elisa in 1791, and Galiano and Valdes in 1792. That can only be adequately done by a person having access to the Archives General of the Indies at Seville. Nor do I intend to touch the work of Vancouver. His own monumental volumes contain the fullest information, and Professor Meany's commentary has added the spice of local and personal interest.

Taking stock then of the advance of knowledge concerning the strait of Fuca from 1778 to 1789, we find that while Captain Cook discovered Cape Flattery, the strait itself was discovered and named, but not entered, by Captain Barkley in 1787; that Meares never entered the strait at all, but that Duffin, in charge of the long boat of the Felice reached Port San Juan in July, 1787; that in August, 1788, Captain Duncan did the first surveying and trading within the strait, and in January, 1790, he published the first chart of it; that the Washington did not make the voyage Meares tells of, but under Captain Gray traded extensively in the strait, examined both shores to a distance of almost fifty miles, and was the first vessel to really navigate that strait.



THE RISE AND EARLY HISTORY OF  
POLITICAL PARTIES IN  
OREGON II

By Walter Carleton Woodward

PART II

*Period of the Territorial Government*

*Political Organization*



### CHAPTER III

## ORGANIZATION OF THE OREGON DEMOCRACY

Not until two years after the settlement of the Oregon question between the United States and Great Britain, did Congress take action looking toward giving Oregon a territorial organization. The delay was occasioned by Southern members who objected to the anti-slavery clause in the proposed organic act. Not that they entertained a serious hope of seeing slavery established in Oregon. They fought in the first place the recognition of the principle that slavery could be excluded from any of the territories, and later, to force concessions favorable to them in the organization of the territory so recently acquired from Mexico. After a long and determined opposition on the part of the pro-slavery element in stubborn allegiance to its sacred institution, the Oregon Territorial bill became a law on August 14th, 1848. From that hour there was a decided change in the political situation in Oregon. The viewpoint was shifted; the view enlarged. The old lines of division began to fade. It is true some of the local jealousies remained and were for a time to continue to be factors in politics, but the focus was different. Oregon was now linked with the United States and with its political life. The very fact of the passage of the territorial bill meant that a party president would appoint party office holders to exercise national supervision over the new territory. As the old local lines of division began to disappear, in the new conditions men began to remember their old political affiliations held "back in the States." But though the change in the point of view was decided and was generally felt, and its significance appreciated, it took some time for political action to adapt itself to the new order. There was a period of transition in which the old had not been forgotten and put aside and in which the new had not been fully espoused—a period in which political con-

ditions were reshaping themselves in preparation for new and national alignments. First to emerge in organization from this political interregnum was the Oregon Democratic party.

Elected in a close campaign for which Oregon had furnished the slogan, President Polk was anxious that the new Territory should be organized during his term of office. To this end he urged his appointee for governor, General Joseph Lane of Indiana, to make all haste on his long journey in order to assume control before March 4, 1849. Arriving at Oregon City March 2nd, on the following day he issued a proclamation extending the laws of the United States over the Territory of Oregon.<sup>1</sup> Oregon was thus started on her territorial career under the auspices of the Democratic party and by a man whose future was to be linked inseparably with that of the new territory. The history of the next decade was to show how thoroughly fitting and significant was such a beginning.

One of the first matters of importance incident to the new relationship which Oregon had assumed was the election of a delegate to Congress. In this election no national party lines were drawn. The factors governing it were found in the old local conditions, affected by the new territorial government. What the attitude of the Government would be toward recognizing property rights of the British interests as represented by the Hudson's Bay Company, was the vital question. The American settlers were quick to suspect the latter of designs on large parts of the domain north of the Columbia and were as quick to resent them. This attitude furnished the issue of the campaign. It resulted in the election, June 6, 1849, of Samuel R. Thurston, the most vigorous opponent of the foreign interests, among the five candidates, and supported by the Mission party. Though recognized as a strong Democrat, as were some of his competitors, it was as a partisan in local affairs that he made his campaign for election.<sup>2</sup> The policy

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<sup>1</sup>Joseph Lane, "Autobiography," Ms., pp. 4, 5.

<sup>2</sup>Mrs. W. H. Odell, "Autobiography of Thurston.," Ms, pp. 4, 5.

he pursued in Congress was consistent with this local platform on which he had been chosen as delegate. Serving at a time when the sectional spirit was so dominant at Washington, he found the Pacific Coast to be "in the angle of cross fires." As a result, in order not to impair his influence, he "shut the book of partisan politics" and turned his attention solely to the material needs of his constituents, securing the passage of the much desired donation land law.<sup>1</sup>

If Oregon needed a striking reminder of the fact that henceforth she was of necessity to experience the exigencies of national political life—that her future was inevitably linked with the party fortunes of the nation, such reminder came promptly. Her citizens had hardly accustomed themselves to the new situation when their new officials were replaced by newer ones by the incoming Whig administration. And as if the very fact of such a sudden change were not of itself sufficient, the lesson was emphasized by contributing conditions. With enough of the demagogue in his make-up to render him a typical successful politician of his day, Lane had so addressed himself to the Oregonians and so adapted himself to local conditions as to put himself in thorough accord and harmony with the people. He was popular from the start. The fact that the majority of his constituents were fellow democrats contributed to this entente cordiale, but he was generally popular regardless of party distinction. He was a man of the people. His Whig successor, General John P. Gaines, was just the opposite. Pompous and aristocratic in bearing, he was tactless in action and overzealous in exerting his authority. At best it was somewhat repugnant to these western Americans, used to governing themselves, to be placed under what they considered foreign officials; under such a man as Gaines it was positively galling. In this situation and in what grew out of it, is to be found the beginning of political parties in Oregon in the national sense. It will hereafter be developed

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<sup>1</sup>Circular address issued by Thurston to Oregon voters, from Washington, D. C., Nov. 15, 1850.

how clever politicians, working upon the popular prejudice, used such a condition to force political organization.

At the session of the territorial legislature which met at Oregon City December 2nd, 1850, that apple of discord in Oregon politics—the capital location question—made its appearance. The two contestants were Oregon City and Salem. The latter had the advantage of location and naturally, also, the support of the Mission element which had already made Salem its center. The location bill, giving Salem the capital, Portland the penitentiary and Corvallis the university, passed both houses by a total vote of 16 to 11.<sup>1</sup> While the bill was before the legislature, Gov. Gaines sent in a special message criticizing it. He showed that inasmuch as it contained more than one provision it was in violation of that section of the act of Congress organizing the territory which provided that a law must embrace but one object and that object expressed in its title. Unsolicited advice was also given in regard to the manner of expending appropriations. This gratuitous interference with the legislative part of the government was bitterly resented by those legislators who were naturally suspicious of executive authority. Their sense of freedom in self-government was outraged. Their dislike of the man, as well as the dislike of his politics by the majority of the members,<sup>2</sup> added to the dissatisfaction. In a defiant mood the bill was passed without the changes suggested. The Whig governor was thus associated with the Oregon City side of the contention—his Democratic opponents with that of Salem. The line of cleavage had been found.

On March 28th, following the adjournment of the legislature in February, appeared the first number of the *Oregon Statesman*. Through its editor, Asahel Bush, cold, calculating, relentless, it was to dominate Oregon politics for a decade, making and breaking politicians at will. It announced that in politics it would be Democratic and pledged its efforts in be-

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<sup>1</sup> Bancroft, Vol. II., p. 146.

<sup>2</sup> *Oregon Statesman*, March 26, 1851.



half of the integrity and unity of the party in Oregon, bidding defiance to the unmerited assaults of the political opposition. Whenever the Democracy should organize the Statesman would be the uncompromising advocate of regular nominations—the only manner by which a party could give efficiency to its action and success to its principles. Thus in its very salutatory it made a tacit argument for party organization, thereby suggesting its own *raison d'être*. Bush at once began the movement for organization. He wrote letters to Democrats asking for contributed articles in favor of such political action,<sup>1</sup> which explains the rather spontaneous effusions in the Statesman by “Pro Bono Publico,” “Jeffersonian,” “Democracy,” and their political kinsmen, from over the Territory. But at the same time Bush did not allow the enthusiasm of youth to overthrow the caution of the successful, practical politician he was. Requested to urge the importance of electing democrats to the legislature in the June election, 1851, he replied that in the absence of an organization such a course would lose them more Whig votes than it would gain them Democratic.<sup>2</sup> In the very next issue following the election, however, which had revealed encouraging Democratic strength, the leading editorial in the Statesman was headed, “Organization of Democracy.”<sup>3</sup>

The choice of a delegate to Congress was also before the people in the Spring of 1851. Thurston, after an able and diligent term, was on the way home to face opposition for his unfair treatment of Dr. McLoughlin in the donation land bill. Lane had been mentioned to succeed him and in March was unanimously nominated at a meeting of the citizens of Yamhill County at LaFayette, at which Lane's personal friend, Gen. Joel Palmer, presided. The prospect of a contest between two such influential and aggressive Democrats was far from reassuring to Bush and those who were carefully laying plans for the organization of their party. Harmony and unanimity

<sup>1</sup>Private Correspondence, Bush to M. P. Deady, April 1, 1851.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid, May 17, 1851.

<sup>3</sup>Statesman, June 13, 1851.

of action were necessary for success, and such a contest as this, which threatened factional strife and jealousy was much to be deprecated. Bush felt the delicacy and embarrassment of his position keenly and declared privately that he would pursue an independent course in his paper and uphold party rather than its individual members.<sup>1</sup> The assuming of an attitude of neutrality by Bush, in the light of his later career, is almost unthinkable. The political situation was thus greatly relieved by the death of the returning delegate. On May 2nd, the *Statesman* announced the demise of Thurston and likewise noticed the return of Lane from the California mines. In the next issue, May 9th, Bush came out strongly for Lane, explaining the *Statesman's* previous neutral attitude in the fact of there being no organization or nomination to decide between the Democratic candidates. But now there was but one candidate in the field and the *Statesman* would support him in behalf of the political creed of which he was the exponent. It believed thoroughly in his devotion to the principles, usages and interests of the great Democratic party. Bush thus forced to the front the recognition of political differences in the delegate question, there being no opposing Whig candidate—a position which he had refused to take on the legislative ticket. At the same time the *Oregonian*, which in its first issue, December 4th, 1850, had announced active allegiance to the “present administration and all the principles of the great Whig party” was now becoming non-partisan in tone. It demanded only a high-minded man of ability and would not stop to inquire to what party he belonged.<sup>2</sup> Meanwhile another candidate entered the field in the person of W. H. Willson. Though primarily representing the Missionary influence which had supported Thurston, he, too, was a Democrat. Hence, Bush, though personally favorable to Lane, and having announced that he would support him, is evidently so solicitous for party harmony that he has not a word more to say in his

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<sup>1</sup>Bush to Deady, April 17, 1851.

<sup>2</sup>*Oregonian*, March 8, 1851.

favor during the remainder of the campaign. The Milwaukie Star, Democratic, was more outspoken. It could not for a moment give countenance to Willson's candidacy against a brother Democrat, which would stir up strife in the party. While pleading for party unity, the Star at the same time naively asks the Whigs to support Lane. It urges that in so doing they will lose no political strength as the delegate has no vote in Congress; that both Whigs and Democrats will be equal participators in every measure he brings about for Oregon's advancement.<sup>1</sup> Lane himself, both publicly and privately, took a non-partisan stand which was inclined to disarm any partisan opposition.<sup>2</sup> Both candidates were Democrats but neither ran as such.<sup>3</sup> The four newspapers—the Oregonian and Spectator,<sup>4</sup> Whig, and the Statesman and Star, Democratic—were committed more or less actively to Lane,<sup>5</sup> who was elected by a vote of 1,911 to 426.

In the Statesman of June 13th, immediately after the election, appeared a call for a democratic convention to be held July 4th at Salem for the purpose of effecting a permanent organization of the party in Marion county. Bush heartily endorsed the movement editorially and expressed his satisfaction in the fact that it was general throughout the Territory. By this time the question of party organization had become a definite issue. The Democrats, clearly in the majority and smarting under the dominance of Whig officials, took a strong position in the affirmative. The Marion county convention above mentioned passed strong resolutions on the subject. Those resolutions maintained that political parties are inseparable from a free government; that the only natural division of parties in this country is that which has existed since the contest between Jefferson and Adams, under the names of

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<sup>1</sup>Star, May 22, 1851.

<sup>2</sup>Personal Correspondence, Lane to J. W. Nesmith, May 27, 1851.

<sup>3</sup>Statesman, June 23, 1857, in retrospect.

<sup>4</sup>While the Spectator did not become a distinctively partisan paper until early in 1852, it was Whig in attitude.

<sup>5</sup>Star, May 22, 1851.

Republican and Democrat and Federal or Whig; and that Democratic principles are<sup>1</sup> as applicable to Oregon as to any other portion of the nation. These and other arguments were voiced continually in the Statesman. The democrats were already looking toward a state organization under which they could elect their own officials and it was urged that party machinery should be perfected in anticipation of statehood.<sup>2</sup> Extracts from Eastern papers, both Whig and Democratic, appear, in which the system of party organization and discipline is upheld.

The opposite position was as firmly taken by the Whigs. They maintained that the people of Oregon, far from the center of political strife, should not be distracted by the fires of partisan passion. Attention should rather be turned to the local needs of Oregon. The citizens of the Territory should work unitedly in behalf of those material interests which were not political in their nature. The zeal of the Democrats in the matter was attributed to the ambition of aspiring politicians for place and power. In reply the Statesman asked—"Who first roused the slumbering fires of party feeling in Oregon? Ask the party which has swarmed the Territory with Whig officers, pledged and sworn to aid the schemes and promote the interests of Whiggery." The Whigs asserted that Gen. Lane was opposed to party organization, calling to mind his declaration of non-partisanship in the preceding campaign. In answer Bush quoted a letter from Lane, from Washington, dated December 22, 1851, in which he said: "I am glad to witness your efforts to get a Democratic organization. Lose no time in urging the Democrats to organize and unite. All local and sectional issues should be dropped. With the organization and union of the Democracy all will be well in Oregon."<sup>3</sup> This was a rude awakening to the Whigs who had accepted the olive branch held out to them by Lane in June.

<sup>1</sup>Statesman, July 15, 1851.

<sup>2</sup>Statesman, June 13, 1851.

<sup>3</sup>Oregon Weekly Times, Nov. 22, 1851. The Times, published at Portland, was the successor of the Western Star, which had been published at Milwaukie until June, 1851.

<sup>3</sup>Statesman, February 24, 1852.

As a contributive force to the movement for Democratic organization, Bush began gradually to reopen the capital location question in the *Statesman*. The governor maintained his position that the location act was invalid and therefore not binding upon him. On this ground he refused to concur in the expenditure of the appropriations for public buildings. This action had the force of a veto upon the bill as the attorney-general of the United States had given his opinion that the governor's concurrence was necessary to make such expenditure legal.<sup>1</sup> General dissatisfaction resulted and the hostility to Governor Gaines increased. A perusal of the personal correspondence of some of the Democratic leaders at this time shows that there was a hesitancy felt by some in forcing this issue as a basis for party alignment. The aggressiveness of Bush in the matter was questioned by his colleagues in 1851. He maintained privately that while he did not "consider it exactly a political matter, yet the parties concerned necessarily make it somewhat so, especially if we look ahead a few years."<sup>2</sup> His influence was apparently dominant in the matter as some of the conservative ones soon became the most active in the cause. The *Statesman* of September 16th contained a three-column contributed article on the location law from the Salem point of view, signed "Yamhill" and evidently written by M. P. Deady of La Fayette, to whom Bush had written only the month before, justifying himself. Deady was one of the most prominent of the young Democratic leaders and was a man of marked ability. Bush called attention to the article editorially, justifying the amount of space given to it by the importance of the subject and the ability and research with which it was discussed. And in view of its importance to the people of Oregon, he invited communications "from all sources and upon all sides, written in the spirit of courtesy, candor and honest inquiry which characterizes the one we publish

<sup>1</sup>Bancroft, Vol. II., p. 160.

<sup>2</sup>Bush to Deady, August 19, 1851. "Now Deady just place yourself in my position with a very natural feeling of hostility to the band of government officers . . . and tell me in what respect you would have taken a different course."

today.”<sup>1</sup> Thus was the troublesome question opened up which was soon to stir the whole Territory in most bitter partisan strife.

The issue was squarely joined with the meeting of the legislature the first of December, 1851. The Democratic members, greatly in the majority,<sup>2</sup> gathered at Salem in accordance with the provision of the location bill. The Whig minority held the latter to be void and four members of the house and one of the council met at Oregon City. Party alignment was definitely made on the issue. The supreme court became involved in the political controversy. The act of Congress organizing the Territory required the court to hold annual sessions at the capital. The time for the session arrived and the two Whig judges, Wm. Strong and Thos. Nelson, constituting a quorum, met at Oregon City; the Democratic judge, O. C. Pratt, who had been appointed by President Polk, at Salem. This fact greatly emphasized the partisan nature of the contest. Bush and the Democratic leaders had played their game cleverly. They had made an issue between the elected representatives of the people on one hand and the disliked, appointed officials on the other. Always quick to resent outside interference in their affairs, the majority of the people rallied to the support of the legislature at Salem which had organized and proceeded with business. The controversy became violent and was by no means allayed at the adjournment of the legislature or even by the act of the next session of Congress which confirmed the location bill and legalized the Salem session of the legislature.<sup>3</sup> The capital fight became if possible increasingly bitter and more far-reaching in its influences. And the strife seemed to be as heated in naturally neutral localities as in those directly interested, owing to the presence and activity of zealous politicians.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Statesman, September 16, 1851.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., July 4, 1851.

<sup>3</sup> Statesman, June 29, 1852.

<sup>4</sup> Personal conversation with Hon. J. C. Nelson on situation in Yamhill County.



The line of division, however, was not wholly or perfectly made in accordance with past political associations. In some cases the controversy caused a transference of party fealty which had an important influence in the history of the state; notably in the case of Dr. James McBride.<sup>1</sup> He had been a Democrat in Tennessee and Missouri, but took the Oregon City side of the fight, became a leading Whig and one of the founders of the Republican party in Oregon. His son, J. R. McBride, was the first Republican Congressman to represent the state and another son, Geo. W. McBride, in more recent years, was sent to the United States Senate by the same party. No family has, perhaps, been more prominent in the political annals of the state. This is but an example of the far-reaching political influence of this early capital location issue. In other cases sides were taken regardless of party. Jesse Applegate, most irreconcilable of Whigs, took the Salem side of the question.<sup>2</sup> Some, also, who had property interests to consider, took sides irrespective of party. Democrats of Oregon City and Clackamas county entered a vigorous protest against making a party issue of the controversy, which would place them with their political opponents or array them against their own personal interests. These Democrats and the Whigs joined in an attempt to stem the tide which had set in towards party organization. At a mass meeting held on April 15th, 1852, at Milwaukie, the vote was unanimous against the propriety of drawing party lines in Oregon.<sup>3</sup> Resolutions were adopted which deprecated the attempts "of most of our public journals" to base party movements on personalities and local, sectional strife. They also concurred in the call for a mass meeting to be held at Oregon City, April 6th, to nominate candidates for the approaching election, without distinction of party. At this Oregon City meeting Judge W. W. Buck announced that as a Democrat he was opposed to the attempt made to organize the Democratic party upon the basis of local

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Private correspondence, Applegate to Deady, January 26, 1852.

<sup>3</sup>Oregonian, May 8, 1852.

issues and personal quarrels. The fact of the non-partisanship of the meeting was strongly emphasized. In its resolutions a note of warning was sounded against the practice of disregarding established courts and the legally constituted authorities. Washington, Jefferson, Madison, Jackson and Polk were quoted at length, giving warning against the encroachments of legislative power upon the other two departments and upholding the authority of the courts. In the same issue<sup>1</sup> there also appeared a letter from "Independence," the purpose of which was to show the non-political nature of the location fight. The controversy was not Whig and Democrat—not high or low tariff, not North or South, slavery or abolition, it was asserted, but merely location and anti-location. "With what face then can the Salemites declare this contest to be between Whigs and Democrats? Do not be deceived, brother Democrats. The controversy is purely local . . . and has not the least bearing on any doctrine in dispute between the two great political parties. This contest turns upon another hinge altogether. There is a thirsty, office-seeking class of demagogues who desire, for their own promotion, to organize the party, and something inflammatory that will rouse and excite our party to sectional antipathies must be heralded forth." This letter is very typical of the spirit of the opposition. Week after week Editor Dryer of the *Oregonian* attacked the Democratic leaders with acrid and defiant pen. In return the epithets of "nullifiers" and "Encarnacionists"<sup>2</sup> were freely applied to the Whigs and those who espoused the cause of Oregon City.

A rather notable incident of those stirring times was the appearance, shortly after the adjournment of the legislature, of a political satire by the versatile W. L. Adams, who was to become an important factor in Oregon politics. It was entitled "Breakspear—A Melodrame entitled Treason, Strat-

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<sup>1</sup>*Oregonian*, May 8, 1852.

<sup>2</sup>Gov. Gaines was held up to contempt by the Democrats because in the Mexican war he had surrendered at Encarnacion, and, it was asserted, without offering adequate resistance.

agem and Spoils." In it the Democratic leaders were cleverly caricatured and the inspiration of the organization of the Democracy was shown to be the desire of the Salem faction to secure the capital. The "Dramatis Personae" were easily recognizable and the characterizations were so apt, the plot so real and vivid, that the drama made a sensation. It appeared first in the *Oregonian* and was then published in pamphlet form, illustrated with rude engravings. Two editions of the pamphlet were issued. It was considered of such moment by the Democratic politicians that they took pains to secure all the copies possible and retire them from circulation.<sup>1</sup> The actors are portrayed as crafty, conscienceless villains, intriguing for personal gain. They make tools of the stupid people whose tenacity is such for what they term Democracy, which not one in five hundred comprehends,

"That we have only to name our present  
Project, a pure Democratic measure  
And represent ourselves as its defenders,  
And the whole furious and headlong band  
Will rally round us, like Spanish cattle  
Ready to swear that all we say is true."<sup>2</sup>

The production is more than a clever satire. A study of it throws great light on the political situation of the day. Some of the characters involved were ever afterwards known in Oregon politics by the names by which they were designated in "Breakspear."

The Democrats, through the press and through convention resolutions, vehemently denied the charge that they were attempting to organize their party on the location issue. They strongly deprecated the strife and dissension existing, responsibility for which they laid upon their opponents.<sup>3</sup> Bush found

<sup>1</sup>Conversation with Geo. H. Himes.

<sup>2</sup>From a copy of the pamphlet in the possession of Mr. Himes, curator of Oregon Historical Society Collection.

<sup>3</sup>Statesman editorial, "Democratic Issues," March 9, 1852.

Resolution passed by Yamhill County Democratic Convention: "Resolved, That by an organization of the Democratic party upon its long-established and well-known principles, we hope to forever put to rest those local and personal factions which, in times gone by, have been so fruitful a source of discord in our public councils."—Statesman, May 12, 1852.

such a course necessary in order to placate what he termed privately the "tender footed, toady Democrats," who berated the *Statesman*, denouncing it as too violent. He went so far as to ask his friend Deady if he would not get a resolution passed by his county convention sanctioning the manner in which the *Statesman* had been conducted.<sup>1</sup>

In spite of all the obstructive tactics employed by the Whigs and minority Democrats, party organization was steadily progressing. During the session of the last legislature, a Democratic caucus had been held at which it was unanimously resolved that it was "expedient to organize the Democratic party in the Territory of Oregon."<sup>2</sup> A central committee was chosen for one year, of which J. W. Nesmith was chairman.<sup>3</sup> Dates were set for the holding of county conventions throughout the territory. This was the first step toward a general, systematic organization. Nearly all these conventions passed resolutions to the effect that political parties are inseparable from a republican form of government; that they constitute the surest means of selecting faithful and competent servants. They very generally vindicated the Salem legislature and denounced the obstructive measures of the two federal judges and the Whig officials as a whole. There was no united opposition to the various county Democratic tickets nominated by these conventions. The non-partisan convention of Clackamas county has already been noticed. In other counties "Law and Order" tickets were put out.<sup>4</sup> In Umpqua county there was a Whig ticket. Bush urged all to vote the straight Democratic ticket, which is the first appearance in Oregon of this old party slogan, "Vot'er straight."<sup>5</sup> The June election, 1852, was very favorable to the Democrats. The opposition carried but two counties, Clackamas and Washington. The result was divided in Yamhill. In commenting upon the result, Bush said the

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<sup>1</sup>Bush to Deady, April 8, 1852.

<sup>2</sup>*Statesman*, January 27, 1852.

<sup>3</sup>Nesmith to Deady, February 6, 1852.

<sup>4</sup>*Oregonian*, May 8, 1852.

<sup>5</sup>*Statesman*, April 27, 1852.

verdict triumphantly sustained the legislature and declared in favor of party organization. "The propriety of our recent organization, though hastily and imperfectly got up, and the necessity and expediency of keeping it up in all future contests, will scarcely hereafter be questioned by any reflecting democrat."<sup>1</sup>

It is only by a study of the newspapers of the period that one can appreciate the party rancor that by this time existed. Epithets unprintable, now, were hurled back and forth as freely as if they were the mere social amenities of the day. Judge Pratt was considered a Democratic leader, with Bush as the power behind the throne, and his followers and the party in general were known as Durhamites.<sup>2</sup> The extreme partisanship of the Democrats in their hatred of the Whig officials, was forcibly displayed in the following session of the legislature, in '52 and '53. The mere sending by Gov. Gaines of a message to the assembly roused a storm of opposition from the Democrats. A resolution was at once introduced to the effect that as the legislative department was independent of the executive, the further consideration of the message be indefinitely postponed.<sup>3</sup> The discussion which followed was long, heated and often grandiose.<sup>4</sup> It was made to appear that in the innocent and inoffensive message lurked a deadly enemy of civil liberty! "Overthrowing the bulwarks of American liberty," "the clanking chains of the despot," "insidious wiles of designing men," are examples of expression which characterized the onslaught.<sup>5</sup> At the same time the message itself was decried as inane and unworthy of consideration. The danger "lies in the encroachment of executive power, which like the stealthy crawl of the moonlit crocodile, approaches

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., June 15, 1852.

<sup>2</sup>Pratt had sold a band of Spanish cattle which he had purchased from a man named Durham, for a high price, the purchaser having been led to believe he was buying blooded Durham stock.

<sup>3</sup>Oregonian, December 18, 1852.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., January 8, 1852.

<sup>5</sup>J. K. Hardin: "I feel it my duty, as one of the sentinels placed by the people to guard the citadel of their rights, to meet him (Gov. Gaines) at the threshold and say, 'Stop! Thus far shalt thou go but no farther.'"

its victim." The resolution carried, but only by the close vote of 12 to 10. The vote is significant for it is important to note that thus early is found a dissenting minority in the Democratic ranks which refuses to be drawn to the extreme insisted upon by the radical leaders. In the discussion one member<sup>1</sup> warned his rabid colleagues that the pursuance of the course they were adopting would ruin the Democratic party. His Democracy was immediately challenged by a radical,<sup>2</sup> who insinuated that he was like others in the Territory "who picked up their Democracy as they crossed the Rocky Mountains." The reply is highly suggestive of the high-handed manner in which the ring Democrats promptly read out of the party all those who questioned their methods. The term National Democrats was this early applied to those who desired to base their party allegiance on broader grounds, to distinguish them from the Durham faction or the machine.<sup>3</sup>

The action of the legislature was the inspiration of tireless invective on the part of the Oregonian. It charged that the warfare waged against Gaines was for the purpose of deceiving the new immigrants and winning them into the embrace of Durhamism;<sup>4</sup> that the welfare of the people was neglected and necessary legislative measures stifled for the furtherance of political schemes; that measures of the Durham members were passed while those of the National Democrats and Whigs were killed with the purpose of killing their authors;<sup>5</sup> that deception, falsehood, villification, and assault were in Oregon synonymous with the word "Democracy," which was but another term for "Prattocracy"; that the sole idea of the political gamblers was that "Prattism must prevail," that they might secure place and power.<sup>6</sup> As has been suggested, there was a strong conviction at the time of the organization of the territorial government that offices should be filled by Oregon men

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<sup>1</sup>F. A. Chenoweth of Clarke and Lewis counties.

<sup>2</sup>A. C. Gibbs of Umpqua county.

<sup>3</sup>Oregonian, January 22, 1853.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., January 15, 1853.

<sup>5</sup>Oregonian, March 5, 1853.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., December 25, 1852.



rather than by men imported from the East. Charges were made in 1851 that the district judges were not holding their terms of court regularly and that as a result justice was delayed and criminals had escaped. This increased the general dissatisfaction with imported officials, especially as they were Whigs. The independent, if not impertinent, attitude of the people is exemplified in a resolution adopted at a public meeting in Portland, April 1, 1851: "Resolved—That the President of the United States be respectfully informed that there are many respectable individuals in Oregon capable of discharging the duties devolving upon the judges, as well as filling any other office under the territorial government, who would either discharge the duties or resign the office.<sup>1</sup> The very first business transacted by the legislature which met in the following December, was to draft a joint memorial asking Congress to amend the organic act so as to permit the election by the people of all the territorial officers. Blissful confidence was expressed that Congress would graciously accede to the request. Nevertheless a bill was passed to the effect that if Congress should be so inconsiderate as to adjourn without granting the petition, a special election should be called within sixty days to vote upon the question of calling a convention to frame a state constitution. Democratic mass meetings and conventions followed all over the territory, at which the memorial was vigorously upheld. A few federal or "non-partisan" meetings are recorded which just as strenuously opposed it. The movement for statehood and the spirit of independence which demanded the popular election of all officers are inseparable in the history of Oregon Territory. Wherever either is brought to the front, the other is found as an underlying factor. They cannot be discussed separately.

As another presidential election approached, with indications favorable to the election of Pierce, the Democratic attitude toward statehood became less violent and the constitu-

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<sup>1</sup>Statesman, April 11, 1851.

<sup>2</sup>Statesman, January 27, 1852.

tional convention was not called. Bush, in stating his opposition to the convention privately, said that if Scott's election were certain and the petition for the election of officers certain not to be granted it would alter the case amazingly; but that in the prospect of the election of Pierce and of the passage of the memorial at the next session of Congress, they had a double prospect of relief.<sup>1</sup> In the legislature of '52-'53, the lower house voted 14 to 9 to submit the question of calling a constitutional convention to the people.<sup>2</sup> But the council, which was more strongly Democratic, rejected the proposition.<sup>3</sup> With the news of the election of Pierce the ardor of the Democrats for statehood was cooled, for Whig officials would now give way to Democratic appointees. On the other hand, the Whigs who had so strenuously opposed the movement now began to see its merits.

The Democrats already had control of the legislative branch of the government and the executive would now be theirs. Judge Nelson had resigned and Lane had been instructed to prevent the confirmation of a successor by the Senate until the hoped-for Democratic administration should come into power, which would give the Durhamites the control of the judiciary.<sup>4</sup> The well laid plans of the Democratic leaders were rapidly developing. Nevertheless they did not expect to take any chances, even with their own party administration. The purpose of the first Democratic Territorial Convention was stated in the call to be the nomination of a candidate for delegate to Congress and "to recommend to the executive of the United States suitable persons to fill the various federal offices in this territory."<sup>5</sup> The appointments when made were very satisfactory indeed, all the officials but one being Oregonians. This gave the Democrats an appreciated opportunity for comparing

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<sup>1</sup>Bush to Deady, September 3, 1852.

<sup>2</sup>Statesman, January 22, 1853.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., March 12, 1853. In the same issue Bush recedes from the pronounced ground he had taken in the past. He says, editorially, the question should be "well and dispassionately" considered and speaks of the heavy expense of a state government.

<sup>4</sup>Bush to Deady, February, 1852.

<sup>5</sup>Statesman, January 22, 1853.

the treatment of Oregon by the two Administrations. In an editorial on "The Difference," Bush says the places will be now filled by Oregonians and the salaries received and expended at home, instead of being "gobbled up by a set of foreign mercenaries and taken out of the country." The only consolation the Whigs had in the tide of Democratic success was found in the rejection by the Senate of the nomination of the Durham leader, Pratt, for chief justice.<sup>1</sup> General Lane, who was by this time the idol of the Oregon Democracy, returned to succeed Gaines as governor on May 16th. But this was merely to gratify the personal desire of Lane,<sup>2</sup> as it was understood that he would run again for delegate, he having in fact been already nominated. He accordingly resigned three days after succeeding Gaines, which elevated Geo. L. Curry, the secretary, to the position of governor.

It has been shown that organization of the Democratic party in Oregon was first effected in 1852. It was not complete, but the several county conventions had put party tickets in the field and forced partisanship to the front. The issue of the movement as shown in the election results, and the triumphs of the Democracy which followed, served to confirm the Democrats in the determination to perfect a permanent organization. Flushed with success, they entered upon the campaign of 1853 with zeal and aggressiveness. The first Territorial Democratic convention met at Salem, April 11th and 12th, at the call of the Territorial central committee, appointed at the Democratic caucus the year previous. Lane was nominated to succeed himself as delegate, receiving 38 votes. M. P. Deady and Cyrus Olney, associate justices, received 11 and 5 votes respectively. The convention expressed itself as feeling the necessity, in organizing the party in Oregon, of making it "thorough, radical and efficient" and appealed for hearty co-operation to this end. It is interesting to note that the spirit of expansion which had taken hold of the National

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<sup>1</sup>Pratt's confirmation was defeated by Senator Douglas on personal grounds.

<sup>2</sup>Lane, *Autobiography*, Ms., p. 58.

Democracy and which was beginning to manifest itself in designs on Cuba, is reflected in this first Territorial convention in the far Northwest. The fifth resolution declared that the Sandwich Islands are a natural and almost necessary appendage to the American possessions on the Pacific Coast and that Oregon Territory feels a deep interest in their acquisition by the United States. It was resolved that any transcontinental railroad must include a branch from San Francisco to Puget Sound. The National Democratic platform of 1852 adopted at Baltimore was endorsed, thus introducing national issues into Oregon politics for the first time in this campaign of 1853.

The opposition to the Democracy still opposed political parties in Oregon. Hence, there was no organization or machinery for bringing out a candidate against Lane for delegate. However, A. A. Skinner, who had been a judge under the Provisional government, announced in a letter to the *Oregonian* of May 21st, that a portion of his fellow citizens "without distinction of party" had requested him to become a candidate and that he would comply. He proceeded to give his views, to the effect that parties are unnecessary and pernicious in a Territory; that their introduction is fraught with evil consequences—ill blood and strife. Despite his non-partisan pretensions Skinner argued ably for the good Whig doctrine of federal aid for internal improvements. The *Oregonian* forthwith put his name at its masthead under the caption of "The People's Party." The campaign was brief but hotly contested. On the one hand Lane was bitterly attacked for base deception in having sought office as a non-partisan, in pledging himself to support no political organization, even decrying political parties in a territory—and then completely changing front immediately after election.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand Skinner was characterized as a narrow, prejudiced federalist seeking to hide his partisan bias under the professions of no-

<sup>1</sup>*Oregonian*, March 12, 1853.

*Ibid.*, April 2, 1853.

*Ibid.*, May 14, 1853.

partyism.<sup>1</sup> The Jackson County Democratic convention declared that the cry of "people's party" and "people's candidate" was but a new subterfuge behind which Whiggery sought to make a successful inroad into the ranks of Democracy "to steal the livery of heaven to serve the devil in."<sup>2</sup> The victory for the Democrats was decisive. Lane was elected by a vote of 4,529 to 2,959.<sup>3</sup> All the new members of the council were Democrats. Four Whigs or "People's Party" men were elected to the lower house—one each from Lane, Umpqua, Washington and Jackson counties. It was a victory for party organization. The Oregon Democracy was now thoroughly entrenched in the Territory—political parties had come to stay. Through it all the fine hand of Asahel Bush was discernible and his dictatorship in Oregon was clearly foreshadowed if indeed it had not already come to pass.

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<sup>1</sup>Statesman, May 21, 1853.

<sup>2</sup>Statesman, May 8, 1853.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., June 23, 1857.

## CHAPTER IV

# THE PERIOD OF ANTI-DEMOCRATIC ORGANIZATION

In the decisive Democratic victory of 1853 the Whigs finally read their lesson. They realized that party organization was inevitable. The *Oregonian*, with all the force of Dryer's vitriolic pen, attacked partyism right up to the end of the campaign. In the very next issue following the election, the versatile editor championed the cause of Whig organization and outlined a radical party platform.<sup>1</sup> He declared that the Durham Democrats had succeeded in duping the masses with the shibboleth of "Democracy," forcing those who were honest in their political opinions to take issue with them. "Therefore it becomes us, however much we may doubt that the good of the whole people demands a partisan course, under present circumstances to throw to the breeze the Whig banner." Here was the conception of the Oregon Whig party, "born as one out of due season." It was a posthumous child and was never to arrive at healthy maturity.<sup>2</sup>

The platform outlined by the *Oregonian* was clear-cut and comprehensive. As regards local conditions, it announced uncompromising opposition to the consolidation of power in the hands of a few political office hunters. It declared for legislation for the benefit of the people rather than of faction; for strict accountability of public officers; free lands for bona fide settlers; free speech and a free press, unawed by the threats of party demagogues; a system of naturalization by which every foreigner should be placed upon an equal footing with those in the Atlantic States. Nationally, the planks of the tentative platform were: A safe, speedy and economical sys-

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<sup>1</sup>*Oregonian*, June 18, 1853.

<sup>2</sup>"The Sewer man (Dryer) is in favor of organizing the Whig party. Greeley of the New York Tribune says that the Whig party is dead in the states. But, like all animals of the reptile order, it dies in the extremities last; and him of the Sewer (the *Oregonian*) is the last agonizing knot of the tail."—*Statesman*, July 4, 1853.



tem of internal improvements by the general government; encouragement of home productions by a discriminating tariff upon manufactures, adequate to the expenditures of an economic administration of the government; the construction of a railroad by the general government, from the Mississippi river to some point on the Pacific Coast, within the old boundaries of Oregon.

Having given up the plea of non-partisanship, an unnatural position for a man of Dryer's pugnacious temperament, the Oregonian becomes at once a valiant party champion. Taking up his platform in detail, week after week, Dryer enunciates Whig principles and justifies Whig organization. He dwells especially upon the doctrine of internal improvements by the federal government—a doctrine which would appeal strongly to isolated Oregon. The vulnerable mark in the armor of the Oregon Democracy was immediately discovered. The inconsistency was shown of Democrats resolving that the building of a Pacific railroad by the general government was of paramount importance, while at the same time Democratic leaders and statesmen were declaring that the government had not the constitutional authority to make public improvements. Before the end of the year the Whigs were definitely urged by the Oregonian to organize at once in every county.<sup>1</sup> "The stupendous scheme of a grand Pacific railroad" was declared to be purely a Whig policy, destined to be the leading doctrine of the Whig party in Oregon. Dryer recognized in this the trump card of Whiggery in the Territory and he was determined that it should not be stolen by the presumptuous Durhamites.

On March 7th of the following year the movement toward actual organization was launched at a public meeting of the

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<sup>1</sup>Oregonian, November 4, 1853: "Heretofore the Whigs have not deemed it expedient to organize in opposition to this band of political marauders, supposing themselves to be in a hopeless minority. But the time has now come when further submission to the locofoco party would be highly criminal. Therefore we ask every Whig in Oregon to come out from among the Durham wolves. Let us take our position—unfurl our banners—proclaim our principles and charge manfully into the Philistine camp."

Whigs of Portland.<sup>1</sup> After attacking the abuses of Durham rule, they sent to their "brother Whigs throughout the Territory a full, frank and unalterable notice that henceforth and forever we stand on the platform of the Republican Whig party." They nominated a ticket to be voted upon at the approaching city election and made recommendation to the various counties to present full Whig tickets for county and territorial officers at the next June election. As a result of this meeting the Oregonian exultantly announced that the Whig party for the first time in Oregon stood out in bold relief, prepared and determined to do battle with a common enemy in a common cause; that the siren song of "Democracy" had been chanted for the last time, to Whig ears.

General Whig organization followed. It was not yet thorough and complete and was not distinctively Whig in every county. Washington county was a Whig stronghold and its convention, held May 6, 1854, issued a clear statement justifying organization.<sup>2</sup> The assembled delegates declared that they had tried in vain to induce all parties to lay aside prejudices of national parties; had sought to sustain good men for office regardless of politics, but that their overtures of peace had been met with bitter hostility. They had found themselves a proscribed class, treated like a conquered people. This convention, so far as the newspapers of the time show, made one of the very first references in Oregon to the opening struggle over the organization of those western territories, which struggle was big with the destinies of the nation. A rap was taken at Douglas' Kansas-Nebraska bill in the declaration: "We regard the several compromises made by Congress and acquiesced in by the people, as final, conclusive and binding." It is somewhat diverting to find these Whigs resolving that the federal offices of the Territory should be filled by citizens of Oregon! The present governor, Davis, was a Democrat and had been imported from Indiana.

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<sup>1</sup>Oregonian, March 11, 1854.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., May 13, 1854.

While Whig organization was in progress another political movement had been making headway. It was to give rise to the Maine Law party. From the very first settlement there had been a strong sentiment in Oregon in favor of the prohibition of the sale of liquor. The Provisional legislature of 1844 enacted a law prohibiting the introduction of ardent spirits into Oregon,<sup>1</sup> the first prohibitory liquor law on the Pacific Coast.<sup>2</sup> The organic law as amended in the summer of 1845 gave the legislature the power to regulate the introduction and sale of intoxicants instead of the power to prohibit, and to this fact has been attributed, partly, the smallness of the majority of votes (203) cast for the amended law on July 26, 1845.<sup>3</sup> At the December session of the legislature a stringent prohibitory law was passed.<sup>4</sup> But it was generally asserted that the Hudson's Bay Company continued to import liquor for purposes of trade, while vigorous action was taken toward enforcing the law among the Americans. This caused dissatisfaction, and the result was that at the next annual session a license law was substituted, passed only over the emphatic veto of Governor Abernethy.

The passage of the prohibitory liquor law in the state of Maine in 1851 was reflected across the continent in Oregon within a few months. Considering the vast distances separating the coast from the East—the obstructive mountain ranges, the intervening deserts or the long sea route—it is a matter of surprise to note how quickly eastern movements or events became factors in the life and thought of Oregon in these early days. This is a good instance in point. In May, 1852, a temperance convention was held at Salem, attended by delegates from several counties.<sup>5</sup> The Convention declared for a Maine law for Oregon and a committee was appointed to confer with legislative candidates to get their attitude on the

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<sup>1</sup>Oregon Archives, p. 44.

<sup>2</sup>Thornton, "History of the Provisional Government," p. 69.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 72.

<sup>4</sup>Oregon Archives, pp. 131, 132; Spectator, February 5, 1846.

<sup>5</sup>Statesman, May 18, 1852.

question "that the people may fully understand what they are supporting." The general interest in the subject is reflected in the numerous clippings from the eastern papers in the Oregon press during the year 1853, relative to prohibition in general and the working of the Maine law in particular. The Oregon Territory Temperance Association met at Salem in April, 1854, and resolved that the Maine law, modified so as not to conflict with the Territorial government, should be considered as the platform of the Territory. It was recommended that the friends of temperance meet at the various county seats on the first Tuesday in May to nominate candidates for the legislative assembly. Reports of the Marion and Yamhill county conventions show the movement to be strongly political.<sup>1</sup> The Yamhill resolutions declare that it *is* a political issue; that the interests of temperance are paramount to all ordinary political issues and that the participants pledge themselves to vote for no candidate for the legislature who is not known to be in favor of the Maine liquor law.

Thus in 1854, the first year in which the Democrats contend with organized opposition, that opposition does not present a united front, but is divided in two organizations. While the Maine law partisans had no unity with either of the old parties it was natural that the two minority parties in the Territory should tend to make common cause against the Durhamites. This they did in part, apparently without well concerted purpose. There was no uniformity of procedure. For example, in Marion county there was a Maine Law, but no Whig ticket and the vote shows that the Whigs supported the Maine Law candidates. That one of the latter receiving the highest vote, Orange Jacobs, was but 12 votes behind the low Democratic nominee. In Washington county there was a Whig but no Maine Law ticket. In Polk, where the relative strength of the Democrats and Maine Laws proved about 4 to 1, there were no Whig candidates, but in a few instances the candidates were denominated, "Maine Law-Whig", thus indicating coalition. Yam-

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<sup>1</sup>Oregonian, May 13, 1854.

hill county had three distinct tickets in the field.<sup>1</sup> Bush stated the situation clearly from the Democratic standpoint.<sup>2</sup> He declared that Democracy was opposed by Whigs—openly, when any hope was entertained of succeeding under “that corrupt and often rebuked organization”; secretly, and under disguise of Independents, and Maine Law advocates where there was no prospect of victory under the odious flag of Federalism. Throughout the campaign Bush waged war on the Maine Law party; first, on principle, opposing the doctrine of prohibition; second, and more emphatically, on political grounds, stigmatizing the movement as a mere trick to aid the Whigs in defeating the Democrats.<sup>3</sup> The Marion County Democratic convention of May 6th soberly decreed that as Democrats they did not recognize the Maine liquor law as a legitimate political issue.

The results of the election were generally favorable to the Democratic candidates but the latter appreciated the fact that their success had for the first time cost them a sharp struggle. The efficacy of organization on the part of the minority was demonstrated. As the Statesman averred, party lines were now distinctly and permanently drawn and there remained no back or neutral ground in Oregon politics.<sup>4</sup> Bush, in reviewing the election results, commended Clackamas, Linn, Polk and Yamhill counties as having acquitted themselves nobly in their struggle against all the isms of the day. On the other hand, Marion and Benton, heretofore the standard Democratic counties, had been afflicted with serious disaffections in the Democratic ranks, not resulting in total defeat, but giving much regret to the friends of Democracy everywhere. He

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<sup>1</sup>The vote on the legislative tickets indicates the relative strength of the parties in Yamhill county:

A. J. Hembree, Democrat, 270.

Martin Olds, Democrat, 252.

A. G. Henry, Whig, 268.

Wm. Logan, Whig, 195.

J. H. D. Henderson, M. Law, 131.

G. W. Burnett, M. Law, 106.

<sup>2</sup>Statesman, May 16, 1854.

<sup>3</sup>Statesman, April 25 and May 2, 1854.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., June 20, 1854.

exulted in the fact that no Maine Law candidate had been elected to the legislature and only eight Whigs.<sup>1</sup> The opposition was sufficient to impress the Durhamites with the necessity of forgetting past factions and differences among themselves and of making common cause against presumptuous opponents.<sup>2</sup>

The sky had not yet cleared after the stress of the June election when another cloud loomed big on the political horizon. It was the precursor of such a sudden, violent storm in Oregon politics as has not been seen before nor since. It broke with the violence of a hurricane, spent its fury and died away, almost as quickly as it had come. It was the appearance in the Territory of the Know Nothing movement, which had appeared in the East in 1852, under the name of the American party. It was the reappearance on a larger scale, in American politics, of the attempts which had been made in eastern cities in 1835 and in 1843 to establish a "Native American" party. It took the form of a secret, oath-bound organization and avowed hostility to the political influence of foreigners in our government. Its design was to oppose the easy naturalization laws and demanded the selection of none but natives for office.<sup>3</sup> There were no peculiar conditions in Oregon sufficient to explain the furor raised by the introduction of the new issue. It has been suggested by Bancroft that it was largely an expression of the old antipathies toward the foreign element in the settlement of Oregon.<sup>4</sup> But these were rapidly passing away in the violence of national party strife. A study of the contemporary press does not suggest such potent local anti-foreign sentiment. The real explanation will become obvious in the story of the bitter struggle.

As early as 1852 Bush had attacked Native Americanism as but another exhibition of the spirit of the old Alien and Sedition laws.<sup>5</sup> But the issue was not joined until 1854 when

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., June 13 and June 27, 1854.

<sup>2</sup>Statesman, June 20, 1854—editorial on "Democratic Union."

<sup>3</sup>Johnston, "American Politics," p. 169.

<sup>4</sup>Bancroft, "History of Oregon," Vol. II., pp. 357, 358.

<sup>5</sup>Statesman, March 30, 1852.



the influence of the American party began to be manifest in the eastern elections. On July 25, 1854, the Statesman speaks of an extensive secret society flourishing in the East which was merely a Native American political party and which had already gotten itself into very bad odor. At this time Bush was in the East. In a letter to his paper dated June 19, and appearing August 8, for the first time in his regular correspondence he calls attention to the Know Nothings. He predicts for them a short career which will make plain the Alien and Sedition sympathies of 1854 Abolition Whiggery and publish the identity of that party with the old Hartford Convention Federalism. "So, as we can't help it, let this Native American dog (the meanest and most despicable of all curs) have its day." The Oregonian makes its first reference to the new party in August. It makes light of the evident anxiety and apprehensions of the Democrats and declares it "knows nothing" of the existence of such an organization in Oregon.<sup>1</sup> A little later, Dryer tacitly defends Know Nothingism as it gave him a new avenue of attack on the Durhamites. He declares that the idea that a native born American made free by the best blood of Revolutionary sires and educated under laws and institutions truly American, should presume to vote in accordance with the dictates of his own conscience, is a serious innovation to Oregon Democracy.<sup>2</sup> This early statement is significant as indicating the future attitude of the Whigs. They were inclined to look with charity upon any organization which threatened the power of the hated Durhamites.

The operations of the new organization being secret, its growth cannot be very satisfactorily traced. Before the end of the year there were numerous Know Nothing wigwams throughout the Territory and they were increasing steadily. The Know Nothings were enthusiastic and confident that they were going to sweep all before them.<sup>3</sup> There was held at

<sup>1</sup>Oregonian, August 26, 1854.

<sup>2</sup>Oregonian, October 28 and November 4, 1854.

<sup>3</sup>Personal conversation with C. A. Reed, of Portland, a surviving member of Salem Wigwam No. 4.

Portland on November 8, a district Democratic convention of Washington and Columbia counties, to make a nomination to fill a vacancy in the council of the legislature. The resolutions adopted are devoted almost entirely to the new heresy which is utterly condemned. The assembled Democrats declare uncompromising war against all their enemies, whether under the guise of "No Party party, Know Nothings, Native Americans or live Whigs," all of which are the natural allies of the Federal party. But the Durham leaders were clearly panic stricken. There was something insidious and baffling in the march of the movement. It was not only rapidly consolidating the opposition, but it was beginning to make inroads on their own forces. They stormed and denounced but it was like firing into the air. The stealthy enemy exposed no visible point of attack.

At this crisis in the fortunes of Oregon Democracy, there appeared in the *Statesman* of November 1, 1854, a sensational and far-reaching exposure. In the words of Bush, "A friend, who says that through idle curiosity he was induced to become a member of the 'Supreme Order of the Star Spangled Banner' or Know Nothings, has placed in our hands a full and complete exposure of the whole organization, embracing their form of initiation, oaths, obligations, signs, grips, tokens and pass words, the particulars of what has transpired at most of their meetings at this place and a list of the members here."<sup>1</sup> He characterizes the whole thing as the most ridiculous piece of bigotry, intolerance and stupidity grown persons were ever engaged in. He is pleased to find from the list that nearly all the members are Whigs—natural Know Nothings, who should have been admitted without initiation. He regrets, however, to find the names of a few Democrats. Two of the latter are ambitious for legislative honors but they are plainly told that their political days are numbered. In this issue Bush reveals enough to excite a furor and promises further developments in the future, including the publication of a list of

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<sup>1</sup>The *Statesman* was published at Salem at this time.

membership. The next issue of the Statesman is almost wholly devoted to anti-Know Nothingism. The tempest stirred up by the exposure is evident. Bush was ordered to give the name of his informant.<sup>1</sup> He refused. He was told he would be held personally responsible.<sup>2</sup> In reply he hurled defiance at his threateners and continued his exposures week after week. The Salem Know Nothings changed their places of meeting, they did everything to escape the implacable Bush. But the disclosures continued until the whole history and secret operations of the order were exposed.<sup>3</sup>

This was a decided repulse to Americanism in Oregon. It was not that its operations were found to be heinous. Publicity robbed it of that subtle element of mystery which had been its principal asset. Furthermore, with the free use of the lash, the Durham leader headed off an incipient stampede. Bush was now cordially hated but thoroughly feared. His power was unquestioned. He ordered Democrats to stand clear of any connection with the "wolves in sheep's clothing" and emphasized his admonition with a covert threat: "Mark the prediction. There is not a man of prominence or influence belonging to the damning conspiracy in Oregon whose connection with it will not be known in less than six months. They are doomed men."<sup>4</sup> Democrats were inclined to take the imperious editor at his word. It was a venturesome man in Oregon politics at this period who would dare the displeasure of Bush. Many wavering ones, Democrats in particular, reconsidered the advisability of becoming associated with the proscribed Know Nothings.

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<sup>1</sup>Bush received his information through a printer employed on the Statesman named Beebe, who joined the Salem Wigwam as a spy.—Private letter, D. W. Craig to Geo. H. Himes, August 9, 1909.

<sup>2</sup>Personal conversation with Hon. Geo. H. Williams. For a week or more following the first exposure, the latter, armed, daily escorted Bush to his office past threatening Know Nothings.

<sup>3</sup>Statesman, November 28, December 12, 1854; January 2, June 16, June 23, 1855.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., December 12, 1854. "What Democrat does not feel proud in the consciousness that he is pure and free from niggerism, Know Nothingism and all the other isms of the day? Who had not rather be a straight forward, consistent, fearless Democrat, than a shame-faced Know Nothing, skulking around from one garret to another in the darkness of the night."

But Bush and the Durhamites were not yet content. With the opening of the legislature a legislative coup was sprung which was to complete the work begun by the sensational exposure. With but eight members of the opposition in the Assembly, the Durham leaders, accustomed to almost implicit obedience, felt able to force through any measure which the political exigency demanded. The famous Viva Voce ballot law was drawn up and presented for enactment. It provided that thereafter the votes at all general elections should be given viva voce, or by ticket handed to the judges, in both cases to be cried in an audible voice in the presence and hearing of the voters. The management of the bill was entrusted to Delazon Smith, a future storm center in Oregon politics. Smith was absolutely candid as to the purpose of the measure.<sup>1</sup> By the exercise of such a censorship over the voters of Oregon, the Know Nothing movement, which he attacked with venom, was to be killed. With sublime effrontery he argued that the passage of the bill would mean a loss of six to eight hundred votes to the Whigs, whom the Democrats accused of being in alliance with the Know Nothings. In commenting upon the favorable action taken by the lower house, Bush was equally frank: "We hope next week to be able to congratulate the country, the friends of Daylight Deeds, upon the passage of this bill (this Know Nothing antidote) through the upper branch of the assembly." The hope was realized, but not before a fierce struggle. The display of such high-handed arrogance was too much even for a number of the Democratic members. Both the speaker of the house and the president of the council had the temerity to oppose the bill. The vote was 5 to 3 in the council, one Whig being absent, and 14 to 12 in the house.<sup>2</sup> The defense of the Viva Voce law, which the Statesman felt it necessary to make in the weeks which followed, suggests the storm of opposition it aroused. Volatile Dryer of the Oregonian became almost hysterical. "Do these political Ishmael-

<sup>1</sup>Statesman, December 19, 1854.

<sup>2</sup>Oregonian, December 30.

Statesman, December 19 and December 26.

ites suppose that freemen are such craven cowards that they dare not vote as they please for fear of those who ordained Delazon Smith the high priest of the party to whom voters are held accountable for the discharge of a blood-bought privilege?"<sup>1</sup> "No language is too severe in which to attack the political assassins who have assaulted the liberties of the people for personal ends."<sup>2</sup> And thus opened up the memorable campaign of 1855.

The situation was peculiar and complex. On the one hand was Democracy, fearful for its supremacy, but all the more determined and aggressive—prepared for a desperate struggle. On the other hand, if the opposition was inchoate in 1854 it was more so in 1855. It now comprised Whigs, Americans or Know Nothings and prohibitionists or Maine Laws. There were no distinct lines of cleavage between them; neither were they in complete coalition, though the first two elements were practically in that relation.

In December, during the legislative session, there had been a meeting of the Whigs at Salem for the purpose of furthering the organization of their party. Prominently figuring in the proceedings were David Logan, Dr. E. H. Cleaveland, Mark A. Chinn, E. N. Cooke, C. A. Reed, T. J. Dryer and Amory Holbrook. A Territorial central committee was appointed, with power to call a convention and fix the proportion of representation. County committeemen were also appointed for the several counties of the Territory. A statement, drawn up by the president and secretary, Cleaveland and Chinn, respectively, urged the Whigs to effect organization in view of the coming campaign.<sup>3</sup> Accordingly Whig county conventions were held in the spring all over the Territory, to elect delegates to the Territorial Convention and to nominate county tickets.

With the Americans no general political organization was visible. Yet through their Wigwams they seemed to act with

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<sup>1</sup>Oregonian, December 23.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., December 30, 1854, January 6, January 13, 1855.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., December 30, 1854.

comparative concert and intelligence. In but one county, that of Washington, did they effect thorough organization and put out a distinctly American ticket. In 1856 and again in 1857 Washington county persisted in running American tickets though the movement was dead in Oregon after 1855.<sup>1</sup> Yet, strangely enough, perhaps because of the very absence of public organization, the Democratic fire was centered on Know Nothingism.

Shortly after the election of 1854 the Territorial Temperance Association met at Albany, and its members resolved that though badly defeated they were far from discouraged and would re-enter the contest with renewed vigor.<sup>2</sup> The question of prohibition in Oregon continued to be agitated, efforts at organization were made and the temperance movement was still a factor to be reckoned with. Clatsop county held on May 1, a Temperance League Convention and invited attention to a complete ticket, "independent of the old corrupt and partially defunct Whig and Democratic parties." The movement was sufficiently formidable to excite Durhamite spleen. At the opening of the legislative session of '54-'55 a resolution was introduced inviting the ministers of the different denominations to open the deliberations each morning with prayer. A Durhamite member, Crandall of Marion, moved to amend by adding: "Except such ministers as are known to be in favor of the enactment of a Maine liquor law!" And the amendment was but narrowly defeated, by a vote of 14 to 11.<sup>3</sup>

In accordance with the call issued by the Territorial committee the Whigs met at Corvallis, April 18, to nominate a delegate to Congress.<sup>4</sup> Lane had been triumphantly re-nominated by the Democrats the week before at Salem. This was the first and last Territorial Whig convention to be held in Oregon.<sup>5</sup> On the first ballot, Ex-Governor Gaines received

<sup>1</sup>Oregonian, April 19, 1856 and April 4, 1857.

<sup>2</sup>Statesman, June 20, 1854.

<sup>3</sup>Oregonian, December 16, 1854.

<sup>4</sup>Oregonian, April 21, 1855.

<sup>5</sup>The counties represented, with the number of delegates allowed, will give an idea as to Whig strength over the Territory: Umpqua 3, Lane 4, Marion 8, Benton 5, Polk 6, Yamhill 6, Washington 4, Clackamas 8, Multnomah 5, Linn 8. The Jackson delegation arrived late. Wasco, Columbia, Clatsop and Douglas counties were represented in the convention by proxies.



27 votes, Dryer 18, Chinn 11, A. G. Henry 8 and Holbrook 1; on the second Gaines 63, Chinn 3. The only platform adopted was the slogan, "Gen. Gaines against the world!" On the day following, the Americans met in convention at Albany and ratified the nomination of Gaines.<sup>1</sup> Indeed Bush boldly charged that Gaines was a Know Nothing; that the Know Nothings were in control of the Corvallis Whig convention, having previously settled the nomination in a private caucus.

Democratic courage and resolution had risen with the peril. In January, a Territorial Jackson club was organized at Salem as additional machinery with which to combat the contagious heresy. County Clubs were to be organized throughout the Territory. A central vigilance committee was appointed.<sup>2</sup> The constitution of the Yamhill county club provided for a vigilance committee to consist of one from each precinct to report from time to time on the state of the Democratic cause in the several precincts.<sup>3</sup> The Linn county nominating convention urged that each and every Democrat constitute a vigilance committee to rally the Democracy and prevent unsuspecting Democrats from being drawn into the "gull-traps of the midnight assassin."<sup>4</sup> This spirit of bitter antagonism toward the American party is similarly reflected in the various county Democratic conventions. The Territorial convention of April 11th passed strong resolutions of condemnation and aversion.<sup>5</sup>

Insisting that Gaines was a Know Nothing and was asking support as such, Bush appealed to the bona fide Whigs to vote for Lane and rebuke "the minions of Know Nothingism" with which they had nothing in common. He "points with pride" to a letter which he reproduces from John T. Crooks, an old line Whig who "washes his hands of the bastard party

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<sup>1</sup>Statesman, April 28. May 12, the Statesman speaks of the marriage of the two parties as having taken place at Corvallis, the infair being held at Albany.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., January 16.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., February 20.

<sup>4</sup>Statesman, April 10; Resolved, that that Oregon Statesman and others who have labored to lay bare the cloven foot and deformity of this heinous midnight monster by giving the people a true and timely exposure of its sly and treasonable machinations, are really deserving of the fullest approbation of the Democrats of this Territory.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., April 17.

formed by a vile coalition between all the isms, the factions and fanatics in the Territory.”<sup>1</sup> In reply Dryer addressed an editorial “To the Wrigs.” He denies that the issue between Gaines and Lane is Know Nothingism. If the American party had been strong enough it would have run an independent ticket. When the Americans overthrow the Democrats and stand out as a separate party—when they declare themselves on the various public issues such as slavery and the Maine Law, the Whigs of Oregon will have a duty to discharge. Until then, let the Whigs discard all affiliations with the Democratic dynasty. The political issues of the campaign were declared to be found in the *Viva Voce* law—the question of free Oregon or slave Oregon, which was the real Nebraska question—and internal improvements, including a Pacific Railroad and a Pacific Telegraph.<sup>2</sup>

While the Oregonian virtually championed the American cause, it could not speak for all Oregon Whigs. The Multnomah county Whig convention unequivocally disavowed connection with any other party, stoutly maintaining the integrity and principles of Whiggery. Its special aim was declared to be the nomination of Whig candidates to be supported by Whigs.<sup>3</sup> The Americans apparently took the Multnomah Whigs at their word as they put out a ticket of their own, designated as “republican ticket.”<sup>4</sup> In Marion county the opposition put out a “Republican Reform ticket”. It declared opposition to the “so-called Democracy, regardless of party,” supported prohibition and endorsed Gaines.”

A new factor was introduced into Oregon politics before the close of the campaign in the founding at Oregon City of the Oregon Argus, virtually successor to the Spectator which expired in March of this year. The editor was W. L. Adams or “Parson” Adams, he being a militant Campbellite preacher. Uncompromising, dogmatic, combative and eminently expres-

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., May 12.

<sup>2</sup>Oregonian, June 2.

<sup>3</sup>Oregonian, May 12.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., May 26.

sive, he was the Parson Brownlow of the West. Through the *Argus* he now began a career which was of vital influence in the making of Oregon's political history. In his prospectus<sup>1</sup> Adams had announced that the new journal would be devoted to the advocacy of great moral principles; in particular, to the cause of temperance. In party politics it was to be entirely neutral. But in the first issue, the editor, hitherto a Whig, announces that the *Argus* will take the American side in politics and advocate as the last and best hope of our distracted country, an abandonment of old party platforms.<sup>2</sup> Partisan strife in Oregon is deprecated. Gaines is supported as a clever, able and patriotic American citizen. Lane is attacked for inability, hypocrisy, for his pro-slavery schemes in Congress and his demagoguery. From the first the *Argus* puts the temperance question to the fore and sifted the legislative candidates according to their attitude toward the passage of a prohibitive liquor law.

The campaign became personal and virulent beyond description. The Democrats attacked Gaines' Mexican War record and scorned him as a coward and lost to honor. The line of attack on Lane is suggested above. The two stumped the Territory together. In Polk county an altercation took place between them at their public meeting and they came to blows. As the June election approached the *Statesman* went into continued hysterics in its fulminations against the Know Nothings. Bush evidently looked upon the contest as one of life and death for Oregon Democracy. The opposition was sanguine of success.<sup>3</sup> During these strenuous weeks the *Statesman* was generously adorned with such picturesque epithets as "corrupt and wicked coalition, back alley patriots, skunks, hybrid horde, impious oaths, dens of darkness, dregs of fanaticism, midnight assassins, heinous night monster."

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<sup>1</sup>Published in *Oregonian*, October 21, 1854.

<sup>2</sup>*Argus*, April 21, 1855.

<sup>3</sup>"The Whigs and Know Nothings appear confident of Old Gaines' election. God preserve us from the infliction."—Bush to Deady, May 13.

The result of the election was as memorable as the campaign which preceded it. The Democratic victory was literally overwhelming. The Oregonian for once admitted complete defeat without pleading any compensations: "The election has astonished everybody, the Democrats as well as the Whigs. . . . It is now a fixed fact the people of Oregon are willing to be gulled by that talismanic word, 'Democracy'".<sup>1</sup> Lane's majority was 2149. Gaines carried but three counties in the Territory and those by a combined majority of only 79. The political complexion of the legislature was: house, Democrats 28; Whig-K. N., 2; council, Democrats 7, Whig-K. N., 2, one of whom was a hold over.<sup>2</sup> Bush was so intoxicated with success that immediately following the election a long editorial leader appeared in the Statesman championing Gen. Joseph Lane for the presidency of the United States in 1856.<sup>3</sup>

In commenting on the result Dryer found the real crux of the situation when he said that the so-called Democratic party was well organized and thoroughly drilled, while the Whigs were unorganized and never permitted drilling officers to govern or control them on any occasion.<sup>4</sup> Here is the secret of the stability of the Democratic regime in the Territorial period. Hundreds of Whigs rebelled at the attempt to force them into alliance with the Know Nothings, and either remained away from the polls or voted for Lane. The Oregonian suggested that the Whigs did not understand the true principles of the American party, but added that whether the object of that organization be justifiable or not, those principles had been prostrated, and to the advantage of Lane and the Democrats. "The time has come and now," declared Dryer, "for the Whigs in Oregon as a party, to plant themselves upon the great national Whig platform; to boldly, without deviating one jot or tittle from the true path, battle for Whig principles and doctrines." It is significant that before the election the opposition

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<sup>1</sup>Oregonian, June 16.

<sup>2</sup>Statesman, June 16.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., June 9.

<sup>4</sup>Oregonian, June 23.

county nominating conventions were with four exceptions<sup>1</sup> denominated as Whig. In giving the returns, however, the tickets were headed "American" with the evident desire to shift the burden of defeat from the Whigs to the Know Nothings.

As regards the action of the rank and file of Democracy the Oregonian stated the fact to be on record that scarcely without an exception, every member of the American party who had formerly acted with the Democrats, voted the Democratic ticket. Thus did the Viva Voce law accomplish its perfect work. In the face of the abuse and vilification heaped upon the Know Nothing movement it took more stamina and moral courage, than can now be well imagined, for a Democrat publicly to declare himself as one of the proscribed "minions". To do so meant political, if not social outlawry. For Bush never forgot and never forgave. In reviewing the situation in after years,<sup>2</sup> he said that against this secret, oath-bound association, the Viva Voce law interposed a powerful and effective barrier; that while the adjoining state of California, with a political sentiment as strongly Democratic as that of Oregon, was overrun by this proscriptive order, in Oregon it totally failed, unable to endure the broad light of day into which it was forced by the viva voce method of voting.

Within the two years ending with the election of 1855, we have found attempts made along three different lines to organize the opposition to Oregon Democracy. The Whigs had made a fair showing in the election of 1854 but were now thoroughly demoralized through their fusion with the Know Nothings. The latter had promised to sweep the Territory but within a few short months had been utterly routed and overthrown. The prohibitionists were cheerfully leading a forlorn hope. The Democrats, more strongly intrenched than ever, held the field undisputed. They were to continue to do so until the old issues were swallowed up in a new one, vital and all inclusive.

<sup>1</sup>The "Republican" ticket of Multnomah; the "Republican Reform" of Marion; the "American" of Washington and the "Temperance League" ticket of Clatsop.

<sup>2</sup>Statesman, July 10, 1860.

## CHAPTER V

### THE DEMOCRATIC REGIME

The story of the organization of Oregon Democracy has been told—its early triumphs have been recounted. These victories made it plain that the Democratic party held the political mastery in the new Territory. The present purpose is to make a brief study of the manner and spirit in which this authority was exercised.

To review briefly, the election of Pierce in 1852, followed by the appointment of Oregon Democrats to the Territorial offices, had delighted the Durhamites. The latter now controlled all three departments of government. No cloud darkened their political horizon. But they had hardly ceased their self-congratulation before the sky became o'ercast. The failure of Judge Pratt, the Durham leader, to be confirmed by the Senate as Chief Justice, has been mentioned as the only discomfiture of the Democrats at this time. Geo. H. Williams was sent from Iowa to fill the position. While he was an uncompromising Democrat and had been appointed without his knowledge or consent,<sup>1</sup> the fact remained that he was an alien. He was holding an office which rightfully belonged, from the Oregon viewpoint, to an Oregonian. However, while Pratt's defeat caused temporary dissatisfaction, little complaint was raised.

But when after a very brief service as Associate Justice, Matthew P. Deady was displaced without just cause,<sup>2</sup> the Durhamites began to show their teeth. Aside from the mere fact of his being an Oregon man, Deady was eminently qualified for judicial service and was very popular. As a result, the reception given his successor, O. B. McFadden, of Pennsylvania, was decidedly warm, though not in the usual accepted sense. The Statesman, Nov. 22, 1853, showed in a two column editorial the injustice of Deady's removal and openly criticized

<sup>1</sup>Geo. H. Williams, in *Oregon Historical Quarterly* for March, 1901, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup>The only explanation given was that Deady, whose first name was Matthew, was serving under a commission which had been made out in favor of Mordecai P. Deady.



McFadden for accepting the judgeship after having arrived and having learned the circumstances. McFadden declined to take the broad hint to resign, whereupon Bush became abusive. Admitting that the interloper had been a good Democrat in the states, the vital fact remained: "In his selection no citizen of Oregon has been heard."<sup>1</sup> Meetings were held and letters for publication written protesting against the incumbency of McFadden. The latter, in holding the appointment and closing the way for Deady's re-instatement, was considered a political heretic and a traitor to Oregon Democracy.<sup>2</sup> So violent was the opposition that McFadden was transferred early in 1854 to the new Territory of Washington and Deady was re-instated.<sup>3</sup>

It has been stated that Lane returned to Oregon from Washington as governor in the spring of 1853; that he immediately resigned to run again for delegate, which left Secretary Geo. L. Curry in the governor's chair. This was satisfactory to Oregon Democrats as Curry was one of themselves. But here again President Pierce interfered. The result was the arrival in December of John W. Davis of Indiana, with a commission as governor. The Democracy of the new governor could certainly not be questioned as he had represented his party in Congress, had served as Speaker of the House, and had twice been Chairman of the Democratic National Convention. But the Durhamites failed to appreciate the compliment in the appointment of so distinguished a man, as Oregon's executive. To them, he was but another imported office-holder.

These affronts, suffered by the Democrats at the hands of their own Administration at Washington, had come in quick succession. They were as disconcerting as they were unexpected. But Durhamite defiance rose with fancied insults—the determination was rekindled to free the people of Oregon from National tutelage. In March, 1853, the Statesman had

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<sup>1</sup>Statesman, December 6, 1853.

<sup>2</sup>The animosity toward McFadden is vividly shown in the private correspondence between Nesmith and Deady, and Nesmith and Lane.

<sup>3</sup>Bancroft, Vol. II., p. 308.

argued cautiously against statehood. By the end of the year the question bore a very different aspect from a Democratic viewpoint. Hence the legislature which met in December, three days after the arrival of Governor Davis, passed an act calling for a vote, at the forthcoming election, on the question of holding a constitutional convention. The cause of statehood was zealously espoused by Bush in the *Statesman* in the campaign of 1854. On the other hand the *Oregonian* as earnestly opposed it on financial grounds, and accused the Democrats of favoring a state government as a means of securing more offices.<sup>1</sup> The issue was lost by a majority of 869.<sup>2</sup>

But before the result was known, Bush announced that if the question had failed he would hoist the flag—"For a convention in 1855". "And we give the Whigs notice that we shall support this issue as a party measure."<sup>3</sup> Accordingly, a party issue it became. The next legislature had the presumption to pass a joint resolution calling for the appointment of a joint committee to draw up a state constitution.<sup>4</sup> But it receded from this radical position and passed an act like that of the previous year providing for a vote on the question of a constitutional convention. The Democratic Territorial Convention held in the following April, 1855, passed a strong resolution declaring that Oregon should assume the position of a sovereign state. A comparison of the vote on the question for the two years shows that Bush was largely successful in making statehood a Democratic issue. As a rule it was the heavily Democratic counties that gave the strongest support to a constitutional convention. The Whigs as a whole strongly opposed it, though one of their leaders, David Logan, supported the affirmative side of the question. This time, the majority in the negative was 413.

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<sup>1</sup>*Oregonian*, April 1, April 15, 1854.

<sup>2</sup>*Statesman*, July 11, 1854.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, June 20, 1854.

<sup>4</sup>*Oregonian*, January 20, 1855.

Notwithstanding this defeat, at the next session of the legislature, that of '55-'56, the Democrats again passed an act calling for a vote on statehood—the third in three consecutive years. Such was their over-weening zeal that instead of having the vote taken at the regular June election, a special election in April was called. Presumably, such haste was occasioned by the determination to take no chances on the opportunity of helping settle the presidential contest in November. Each year the contest became more partisan and in 1856 it was violently so, and especially on the part of the Statesman. Alonzo Leland, editor of the Democratic Standard, was not en rapport with the powers ordained and saw fit to question the advisability of statehood. Whereupon his apostacy was heralded in the Statesman as the "Iscaiotism of the Standard on the Convention Question."<sup>1</sup> In the spring of 1856 the Oregonian conducted a systematic and continuous campaign of education against the Democratic dogma of statehood. It declared that Oregon did not have population and wealth sufficient to maintain a state government, and opposed the movement as the scheme of a little coterie of politicians and would-be office holders. In 1854 the majority against a constitutional convention had been 869; in 1855 it had been 413. In 1856 it was 249. The imperious Durhanites were steadily nearing the goal.

In the meantime a change more apparent than real, had taken place in the management and personnel of the Democratic machine. While Judge Pratt had been the nominal leader of the Durhanites, the power of Bush, as exerted through the Statesman, was steadily increasing. Naturally, considering his part in the capital fight, Bush got practically no patronage in Oregon City<sup>2</sup> and in the middle of the year 1853 moved the Statesman plant to the new capital.<sup>3</sup> With Bush and the States-

<sup>1</sup>Statesman, April 22, 1856.

<sup>2</sup>"I get very little patronage in Oregon City. I will give a premium on the best essay on prejudice. But Oregon City is not all of Oregon."—Bush to Dedy, April 17, 1851.

<sup>3</sup>"The Statesman has been removed to Salem. It left last Sunday. Rumor says the clergymen at Oregon City gave out the hymn—

'Believing, we rejoice  
To see the curse removed.'"—Oregonian, June 18, 1853.

man as a nucleus, Salem at once became the recognized headquarters and rendezvous of a little coterie of Democratic politicians which held Oregon in the palm of its hand. The popular, or often unpopular, designation of this junto was the "Salem Clique", or Cli-que, as called by an illiterate though pugnacious rural politician.

In 1855 Judge Pratt aspired to succeed General Lane as Oregon's delegate to Congress, and made an active campaign for the nomination. A sharp struggle ensued, short, but very decisive. Behind Lane were the Salem Clique and the popular adulation; behind Pratt, a few non-machine Democrats and the Standard. The rivalry became bitter, the Standard opposing Lane and the Statesman attacking Pratt with malevolence, and all to the edification of the Whigs. In the convention Lane received 53 votes, Pratt but 6.<sup>1</sup> The Durham leader had been effectually dethroned. The supremacy of Lane with the people was signally manifested. But behind it all was Bush, absolutely master of the situation. Lane, with the *bonhomie*—the smooth-tongued and affable—stood before the people as the successful, idolized leader. But the real dictator of the Oregon Democracy was the man behind the Statesman—wary, inflexible, ruthless. From this time the sobriquet, "Durhamites", as denoting the Democratic ring, gave way to that of "Salem Clique" or merely "the Clique."

A complete story of the capricious, arrogant rule in Oregon under the regime of the Salem Clique would form one of the most picturesque chapters in the political history of the West. A few instances will suffice to indicate the nature of that regime. Governor Davis was made plainly to feel by his captious fellow Democrats, soon after his arrival in Oregon, that he was *persona non grata*. There was no cordiality between them. He was made the butt of ridicule by certain of the Clique noted for coarse wit and sharp tongue.<sup>2</sup> Though a life-long Demo-

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<sup>1</sup>"Pratt's sun of Austerlitz has gone down amid the gloom of Waterloo. . . . No man was ever let down so fast."—Nesmith to Deady, April, 1855.

<sup>2</sup>Conversation with Hon. Geo. H. Williams.

crat, the coercive, domineering attitude of his political confreres in Oregon was a revelation to him. Plainly, he did not fit into the scheme of Oregon Democracy. The situation became unbearable to him, and after serving nine months, he resigned in August, 1854. Thereupon the Democrats asked the privilege of banqueting him. He declined the honor in a public letter in which he took the occasion to suggest a few pertinent facts and to offer a little significant advice.<sup>1</sup> Evidently, the Democrats had insisted that he become actively partisan in the canvass for statehood, as he defended himself for not becoming so, on the ground that his position would not allow it. He told his political compatriots plainly that they should abandon personal and sectional considerations and base their actions on principles. He reminded them that "our opponents are entitled to their opinions equally with ourselves"—mild heresy according to Salem Clique standards. The situation was aptly summed up by Dryer in the *Oregonian*.<sup>2</sup> "Gov. Davis was a foreigner. . . . He had neither driven his team across the plains nor been to the mines. Besides, if treated decently at first he might become popular in Oregon. . . . We think he has fairly revenged himself."

Every event or crisis in the Territory was viewed by the Clique at the focus of the narrowest partisanship. This is well illustrated by their attitude concerning the prosecution of the Indian war in Southern Oregon in 1855-6. During the summer of 1855 trouble had been plainly brewing in the south. Depredations and murders were committed by the Indians, followed by a pretty general outbreak. Gov. Curry undertook prompt and vigorous measures toward quelling the disturbance. The Clique frowned upon such undue haste and hampered the governor by attacks and bickerings.<sup>3</sup> Sufficient time should be taken to place the operations on a thorough Democratic basis. "Where would they lead us?" demanded Dryer in the *Oregon-*

<sup>1</sup>The *Oregonian*, August 5, 1854.

<sup>2</sup>The *Oregonian*, August 5, 1854.

<sup>3</sup>"Like you, I'm disgusted with this d—— Injun excitement. Curry ought to be held in. D—— a man who has no judgment."—Bush to Deady. October 22, 1855.

ian. "In any other country but Oregon this war would have a tendency to unite men in a common cause."<sup>1</sup> In the enrollment of volunteer companies, among the commissioned officers a few Whigs and Know Nothings had received appointments, largely as surgeons. This was the occasion of a storm of opposition headed by Bush. To think that despised Know Nothings, recently so thoroughly repudiated by the people, should come into position by appointment—and that by a Democratic governor! It was preposterous, incredible.<sup>2</sup> The Statesman went into one continued paroxysm of frenzy, equal to that which had affected it a few months previous in the anti-Know Nothing campaign. The intractable Bush did not hesitate to threaten the governor: "Mark these words: henceforth in Oregon it is the doctrine of the Democratic party that public offices of no kind shall be conferred upon members of the Know Nothing order or its sympathizers and upholders. And no man who violates that doctrine will be sustained by the Democracy."

A petition was gotten up and copies sent to the faithful throughout the Territory asking that as many signers as possible be secured and that it be forwarded to Gov. Curry at once—"by first mail if can be". The petition read: "To His Excellency: The undersigned, Democratic and anti-Know Nothing voters of Oregon, earnestly petition your excellency to cause to be displaced all members of the Know Nothing party or supporters of that party holding public station, directly or indirectly under you, and that their places be filled by competent Democrats." And all this hue and cry from the mere fact that a half dozen insignificant offices were held by those other than Democrats! It was nothing to the Clique that the appointees were capable and that the need was urgent. This was apparently an issue of far greater import to them than the protection of life in Southern Oregon and the success of the troops in restoring order. The Oregonian condemned in strongest terms the attempt to introduce party politics into that branch of

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<sup>1</sup>Oregonian, November 17, 1855.

<sup>2</sup>Statesman, November 3 and November 10.



the service from which it had ever been excluded by true patriotism.<sup>1</sup> The *Argus* referred to the petition as "the climax of villainy" and quoted the *Democratic Standard* as saying "We hesitate not to distinctly declare that we have no sympathy for and partake not in the spirit that would beget such a petition."<sup>2</sup> But the Clique were not to be denied their peremptory demands. The following session of the legislature reorganized the military department, removing from the governor the power of appointment of officers and substituting election by the legislature. This proved an easy solution. The offensive officers were summarily decapitated and replaced by "competent Democrats."<sup>3</sup> The war was placed on a partisan Democratic basis and the members of the Clique were appeased.

To all outward appearances the utmost harmony existed at this time between Lane and the Democratic Junto who ruled Oregon. But the private correspondence of members of the latter show that as early as 1855 Lane was under the displeasure of the Clique. Hailed as the "Marion of the Mexican war", the "Cincinnatus of Indiana", and heralded as a hero in the role of Indian fighter in Oregon, Lane's popularity was unbounded.<sup>4</sup> This popularity was political capital for the party manipulators and viewed by them as a very valuable asset. As for Lane himself, they were inclined to patronize him among themselves as a "thick skulled old humbug,"<sup>5</sup> to be cultivated as long as he could be used, especially at Washington where his influence was recognized. In 1855 General Joel Palmer, superintendent of Indian affairs in Oregon, was marked by the Democratic leaders for overthrow, and his removal was demanded of Lane. In the accusations against Palmer, sent to Washington by the Legislature, it was charged that "While representing himself as a sound national Democrat, he had perfidiously joined the Know Nothings, binding himself with

<sup>1</sup>*Oregonian*, December 8, 1855.

<sup>2</sup>*Argus*, November 10, 1855.

<sup>3</sup>See *Oregonian*, February 9, 1856.

<sup>4</sup>Lane had done effective service against the Southern Oregon Indians in 1851 and again in 1853.

<sup>5</sup>Nesmith to Deady, September 14, 1855.

oaths to that dark and hellish secret political order.”<sup>1</sup> But General Palmer and Lane were good friends and the latter delayed the political execution. In another instance, instead of securing a certain appointment for a prominent Oregon Democrat, as requested by the Clique, Lane had an Indiana friend appointed. Such audacity was amazing and the political oligarchs gnashed their teeth in rage, among themselves. One member advised “a call of the Cli-que to throw him (Lane) overboard.”<sup>2</sup> A temporary rapprochement was effected but it was evident that serious trouble was ahead for Lane at the hands of the restive Junto.

The rule of Bush and the Clique was absolute and imperious. They laid the plans and issued the orders. It was for the rank and file to obey. And obedience must be unquestioning. If a Democrat forgot this, he must be disciplined. If he persisted in his temerity the wrath of the Statesman was turned upon him and he was destroyed politically. Bush, absolutely uncompromising, took offense easily and the fear of his terrible invective was potent in maintaining party discipline. Jas. F. Gazley, Democratic member of the legislature of '54-'55 from Douglas county, had the hardihood to oppose the Viva Voce law. Misrepresentation and vilification at the hands of Bush followed. “Little did I suspect”, complained Gazley, “that while boldly vindicating principles which I ever have honestly maintained, that clouds of indignation were gathering so gloomily around the political horizon, too soon, alas, to burst upon my unlucky head.”<sup>3</sup>

It became the general rule of Democratic nominating conventions to pledge the delegates to support the candidates and to avow loyalty to them, before those candidates were nominated.<sup>4</sup> Good Democrats never questioned such procedure. The manner in which a man obeyed orders from headquarters was the criterion of his Democracy. “Pizurrinctums” was an

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<sup>1</sup>Quoted by Bancroft, Vol. II., p. 399.

<sup>2</sup>Nesmith to Deady, September 14.

<sup>3</sup>In Oregonian, January 13, 1855.

<sup>4</sup>John Minto in Oregon Historical Quarterly for June, 1908, p. 144.

epithet which came into frequent use by Bush in the Statesman in applying the party lash. It originated in Maine and was used to describe those Democrats who were not "reliable."<sup>1</sup>

It must not be supposed that this autocratic, coercive authority was submitted to with universal equanimity. There was murmuring and threatened revolt from time to time, but until 1857-8 the authority of Bush was sufficient to overawe opposition.<sup>2</sup> An indication of the restiveness of Democrats under the lash of the Salem Clique is found in the following resolution adopted by the Lane County Democratic convention in May, 1856: "Resolved, That we will not make any party issues on men but will stand upon principles, and we consider they who oppose the Democratic party because they happen not to like Bush, Delazon Smith, or other members thereof, as disorganizers and enemies of Democratic principles."<sup>3</sup> The Washington County convention pointed out as the elements of disruption in the party, first "The too dictatorial mandates of a self-constituted leadership"; second, the too little regard for the binding effect of party measures, principles and nominations on political action.<sup>4</sup> Both tendencies were most severely condemned. The Clatsop County Democrats were more charitable and cheerful, extending the olive branch to their prodigal brethren with words which were unctious with forgiving grace: "We earnestly invite every Democrat who has been lured from his party by corrupt and designing factionists, to come up out of Babylon—shake off the vile fetters which have bound him, wash his hands of corruption, abjure his fanaticism, renew his allegiance to the party, and stand forth in the bright sunshine of God, a man and a Democrat."

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<sup>1</sup>Statesman, April 21, 1855.

<sup>2</sup>"They (Oregon Democrats) fear him as the fawning hound fears his master and they dare not disobey his orders. They curse him among the populace, but support and sustain him out of sheer cowardice."—Oregonian, December 29, 1885.

<sup>3</sup>Statesman, May 27, 1856.

<sup>4</sup>Statesman, June 10, 1856.

From certain points of view, the absolute dominance of Democracy in Territorial Oregon is little short of amazing. It is true that Oregon looked upon such illustrious Democrats as Jefferson, Benton, Linn and Polk as having been the true friends of the great Northwest. The long hoped for territorial organization had come at the hands of a Democratic administration. But the fact remained that National Democracy was unalterably opposed in theory and practice to the one great principle, to the support of which Oregon was necessarily committed. And that was the principle of internal improvements by the Federal government. The new and distant Territory was practically dependent upon national aid for the furtherance of various projects which were linked inseparably with her development. Standing out above all of these, the demand for a Pacific railroad furnishes an excellent example. There was unanimity in the demand. With fatuous inconsistency Oregon Democrats declared it to be the duty of the General Government to support the great project, using all means "not inconsistent with the Constitution."<sup>1</sup> Dryer very pertinently asked how men could oppose that which they were in favor of and support that which they opposed and be consistent and honest.<sup>2</sup> But the dilemma offered no appreciable difficulties to Oregon Democrats. They continued to swell the majorities of the party whose great distinguishing mark from the Whigs was its opposition to the policy which its Oregon members demanded. A more striking illustration could scarcely be found in all American politics of obdurate adherence to, and the blind infatuation of, party allegiance.

In the first place, the majority of the people of Oregon had come from those western strongholds of the new, aggressive Democracy, embodied by Jackson, and when party alignment was made in Oregon this fact was emphasized. To these westerners, Democracy was one and the same, whether found in Missouri, Illinois or Oregon. And in the days when a

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<sup>1</sup>Report of Democratic Territorial Convention in Statesman, April 21, 1857.

<sup>2</sup>Oregonian, October 7, 1854.

man's politics were largely hereditary it is not so strange that the old allegiance was maintained, especially when all the local circumstances are taken into consideration. The fact that it was the majority party further strengthened the Oregon Democracy. The desire to be on the winning side with a chance in the distribution of the loaves and fishes, caused not a few to "pick up their Democracy on the way over the Rockies."

Having a good working majority to begin with, the shrewd Democratic leaders were able by various means, some of which have been indicated, to maintain it. The extreme partisanship of the Democrats made them the more easily manageable. They could be handled more effectively in party organization than could the Whigs, who were more impatient of control.<sup>1</sup> A clarion call for loyalty to the eternal and glorious principles of Democracy was sufficient to obscure real issues and rally the faithful against the "minions of Whiggery." First and last, "Democracy" was the paramount issue. This attitude is illustrated by the declaration of a delegate in a Democratic convention, enthusiastically received by those assembled: "The paramount duty of Democrats now is to stick together, for I never expect to see anything good come outside of the Democratic party."<sup>2</sup>

In the last resort, one is forced to return to the conclusion that the controlling force in the situation was found in the coercive influence of the Oregon Statesman and in the personality of its editor, Asahel Bush. The paper and the man were supplementary to each other. The result was a political power well-nigh irresistible. As the official Democratic organ of the Territory, the Statesman had a natural prestige to begin with. Its circulation was much greater than that of the Oregonian and Argus, which were taken largely by the same people. It went into the great majority of the Democratic homes of Oregon. And into these homes there rarely came an opposing paper to challenge its authority, as it was counted almost

<sup>1</sup>Personal conversation with Judge Williams.

<sup>2</sup>Cited by T. W. Davenport in Oregon Historical Quarterly for September, 1908, p. 229.



political heresy to give countenance to a journal of an antagonistic party.<sup>1</sup> In the days when reading material was limited, especially in isolated Oregon, the family newspaper was depended upon as the source of general enlightenment, entertainment and instruction. More or less unconsciously its readers assumed for it the standard of infallibility. This fact rendered its political dictums unquestioned and its political authority well-nigh absolute. By befogging the real issues, by denouncing the opposition, by threatening and abusing the recalcitrant, by encouraging the reliable by fulsome praise and with hopes of reward and last by a constant and adroit use of the talisman, "Democracy," the Statesman exerted a degree of political authority which at the present time can scarcely be appreciated.

But while it was through the medium of the Statesman that the exercise of so great power was possible, the latter is not fully accounted for until the personality of Bush, which has already been suggested, is taken into consideration. In speaking of the autocratic editor, a keen, accurate observer of the political situation of that period says his talent for control was of a high order, as suited to his party and the time. A ready and trenchant writer, with an active and vigorous temperament, a taste and capacity for minute inquiry, a thorough knowledge of the inclinations and idiosyncrasies of his political brethren, possessed of a vinegary sort of wit, and a humor bitter or sweet according to destination, he was the most influential and feared of any man in the Territory.<sup>2</sup> Benevolent despotism in Oregon politics could hardly have been achieved with a mediocre man as editor of the Statesman. But given the latter, managed by a man whose dominant personality, whose constructive and organizing ability were such as to be today the subject of both wonder and admiration, the Democratic regime in Oregon was made possible.

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<sup>1</sup>Conversation with Judge Williams and Geo. H. Himes.

<sup>2</sup>Davenport, p. 244.



# FINANCIAL HISTORY OF OREGON VI

By F. G. Young

## PART V<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The preceding installment should have been designated "Part IV" instead of "Part V."



## CHAPTER I

# TREASURY ADMINISTRATION IN OREGON

*The Portion of Social Income Set Aside for Public Expenditure Exposed to Many Perils.*—That portion of their several incomes which the people, through the procedure of legislative appropriations and state tax levies pursuant thereto, divert from their own private to commonwealth uses is passed through their state treasury. Universal experience proves that only the best skill and care suffice to protect these public funds, while in transit, from waste and loss. As these moneys leave the hands of the tax-payers, or the purchasers of state lands or other property or state service; accumulate in the state treasury; and later are delivered to those who through services performed for the state or goods delivered are entitled to receive them, many risks are encountered. The losses suffered by the Oregon people through loose and unsystematic handling of their public funds will be outlined in this chapter.

As wealth is becoming more socialized and public enterprise is expanding a larger portion, both relatively and absolutely, of the collective income of the people is destined to be thus handled as public funds. The problem of the safe and economic administration of these treasury funds is therefore one of ever growing importance.

That our understandings of this fairly abstruse subject of treasury administration may be as clear and familiar as possible, suppose we picture to ourselves the process of handling our state moneys as comprising three fairly distinct phases: (1) Converging streams of state tax receipts flowing from the different counties; or inflows from different sections of proceeds of sales of land or other property; or the influx from national treasury of five per cent of proceeds of sales of land

by federal authorities within Oregon borders—all pouring into the state treasury.<sup>1</sup> (2) The treasury as a reservoir with its accumulations of public funds—the normal and economic condition of which involves absence of leakage and also absence of large aggregates of idle surplus moneys. (3) The legislature carrying out the will of the people with its system of budgetary legislation, regulating inflow, safe-keeping and outflows—its success or failure in maintaining normal conditions with regard to each.

What are the more striking developments centering in the treasury department at the state house that come into view as we attempt to visualize the course of events connected with the handling of Oregon's public funds?

1. County Delinquency and Non-Acceptance of Greenbacks.—Suppose we bring into the field of vision first the money streams flowing into the state treasury as the result of annual state tax levies. The list given below of balances due from the counties at the end of the successive biennial periods indicate that the channels for the inflow of state tax receipts were not free from obstructions, or that the people did not always respond with alacrity in paying state taxes when due.

1862	.....	\$5,236.26	1886	.....	67,820.06
1864	.....	25,324.73	1888	.....	28,120.03
1866	.....	24,280.30	1890	.....	17,211.91
1868	.....	28,018.30	1892	.....	104,542.42
1870	.....	22,283.38	1894	.....	242,365.56
1872	.....	14,881.16	1896	.....	84,662.02
1874	.....	13,646.44	1898	.....	85,125.04
1876	.....	26,517.95	1900	.....	63,143.66
1878	.....	24,681.40	1902	.....	197,040.49
1880	.....	15,895.69	1904	.....	414,410.98 <sup>2</sup>
1882	.....	20,613.10	1906	.....	222,462.50 <sup>2</sup>
1884	.....	64,077.38	1908	.....	396,866.48 <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Receipts from national treasury include also indemnities, timber sale receipts, etc.

<sup>2</sup>The large aggregate sums of these later periods are due to the fact that the reports are compiled in September, before the counties have remitted fully their receipts for the current year.

Three periods are particularly to be noted when the delinquent balances due from the counties represent abnormally large percentages of the total state levies for their respective bienniums. In the sixties, in the nineties and again in the last decade the aggregates of unpaid taxes due from counties were conspicuously large. The unusual delinquency of the sixties arose out of the fact that several of the counties had collected state taxes in greenbacks and had tendered their quotas in this form of money to the state treasurer who had refused to receive the greenbacks. Five or six counties did this, notwithstanding the requirement of the state law that "the several county treasurers shall pay to the State Treasurer the state tax, in gold and silver coin." The matter was tried out in the courts, the decisions of the circuit and supreme courts of the state being affirmed by the United States Supreme Court. The national law making United States notes a legal tender for debts was held to have no reference to taxes imposed by state authority. The Oregon people adhered to the gold standard in their business transactions during the national greenback epoch and there was naturally not a little public discussion as to the propriety of changing the state's laws with regard to money receivable for taxes so as to give the greenbacks wider circulation and thus exhibit sympathy and support for the National Government and bring Oregon more into line of loyalty to and harmony with it.<sup>1</sup>

The large volume of delinquency in the nineties was clearly due to the hard times prevalent until near the close of this decade. Pretty clear evidences of like results from similar cause are also manifest in the middle of the eighties. In the last decade the large measure of the sums still due when the treasurers compiled their reports was owing to the fact that time had not been given for making remittances of the state taxes of the current years. The end of the period reported had been changed from December 31 to September 30. In the last few years the shares of state taxes due from two counties

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<sup>1</sup>Oregon Statesman, May 9 and June 13, 1864.

have been withheld and the payment of them delayed on the ground of the inequity claimed in the systems of state apportionment.

Probably the most distinctive general impression received in viewing these converging streams of state tax receipts as they flow into the state treasury from year to year is the grudging spirit exhibited by the counties in meeting their obligations for the support of commonwealth activities. There was first the determined effort to palm off greenbacks upon the state treasurer when the "greenbacking" of a private creditor was counted an outrage for which the offender was deserving of and frequently received a sound drubbing. One county was persistent enough with its delinquency as to secure the advantage of the statute of limitations on a snug amount of the state taxes it had failed to pay.<sup>1</sup> From the beginning to the end almost of this half-century a race in under-valuation had been imposed upon the different county assessors as the apportionment of the shares of state taxes due from the different counties was based upon their respective valuations returned. In 1908 one county fought and secured the annulment of the county expenditures rule of apportionment on the ground of unconstitutionality. The inspiring motive, however, was the desire to lower its share of the burden of state taxes. More recently still another county is holding back its quota on a similar complaint.

The second main class of treasury-funds inflow in Oregon's past has been the receipts from the sales of state lands. Strange things are revealed as these streams of money are brought into focus. It is to be remembered that we are not here concerned with the nature of the state's policy in the disposition of its domain. We are intent only on what happens in the handling of the proceeds of the sales, however adequate or inadequate they may have been. The condition we are first struck with is the fact that while school and university lands were being sold virtually no funds reach the state treasury.

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<sup>1</sup>State Treasurer's Report, 1895, pp. 243-4.



They were by law turned into the county treasuries and loaned from these. The county treasurers of course drew a fee from them for their trouble.<sup>1</sup> No accounting by the county treasurers for these funds was enforced, so the Board of Land Commissioners in 1868, when charge of these funds was resumed by the state, had to report: "In some of the counties it (the school fund) had been well and carefully managed, and had constantly accumulated, while in others it had been much neglected, and as a consequence losses had occurred; in some cases, notes had outlawed; in others, they were insufficiently secured, and parties giving notes had changed their residence for parts unknown, while in all, indulgence in the payment of interest had been given, and months, and in some cases, years had passed without its collection."<sup>2</sup>

Even after the state administrative officials were definitely made the custodians in 1868 of these funds accumulated from the proceeds of sales of lands in the different grants the moneys were subject to many vicissitudes of peril before being safely credited to appropriate funds in the state treasury. The legislative "Investigating Commission" reporting in November, 1871, says of the "Board of School Land Commissioners" having charge of the whole matter of state land sales: "No proper books were kept, not even those actually required by law." . . . "On the flimsy pretense that there was not clerical aid in the office sufficient to transact the business, the Board, as a Board, generally refused to receive payments upon lands, though it is on record that some of the members were somewhat more yielding [referring to the peculations of the Secretary of State that will be mentioned later] and did a little business of that sort on their own individual account." Some sixteen hundred different applications for the purchase of state lands were made to this administration between 1868 and 1870. The representative of the Board refused to receive money from the applicants, so these generally took possession

<sup>1</sup>General Laws, 1858, pp. 43-5.

<sup>2</sup>Report of Board of Commissioners, 1868, p. 36.

and had the use of the lands free, until later, when the purchase-money was demanded when they could and did quite frequently vacate.<sup>1</sup>

This same investigation of 1870-1 disclosed four instances in which the purchase-money for lands had been sent to the Secretary of State, S. E. May, ex-officio member of the Board of School Land Commissioners, and he had "converted the same to his own use and did not account therefor to the Board." The sums embezzled aggregated \$652.50.

When the stream of inflow of land-sales money did get under way toward the state treasury in 1870 the conditions affecting it are still interesting though outrageous. The Legislative "Committee of Investigation" of 1878 brings out facts that exhibit the administrations from 1870 to 1878 holding high carnival with these moneys. Thirty-six thousand six hundred forty-four dollars and nine cents were paid for clerical services during this period in this department of the state's affairs. Almost all of this sum went to men who were receiving separate salaries as either private secretary to the governor or as assistant state treasurer. This sum the Committee of Investigation holds was a "disgraceful waste," for of the records of the state's land business it says: "If the purpose had been to conceal under the pretense of exhibiting the real transactions of the land department, they could not have succeeded better." The raiding of the public interest is still further exhibited. The swamp land account, for instance, up to 1878 amounted to \$42,989.34, of which "\$20,736.35 had been paid to the Treasurer and \$22,252.99 paid out for expenses and returned to purchasers." A case is cited where a man is paid \$1,604 as attorney fees for defending the state's claim to a tract which constituted a portion of the land that this same man was under contract to pay the state \$800 for.<sup>2</sup>

Much of the loss to which this inflow of funds was subjected occurred in connection with dealings in direct violation of the

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<sup>1</sup>Report of the Investigating Commission, 1872, pp. 134-140.

<sup>2</sup>Report of the Committee of Investigation, 1878, pp. 6-18. 1

constitution and the law prescribing that no disbursement of public funds should take place except in pursuance of appropriations made by law.

The situation with respect to the receipt of the land sale funds that was probably most discreditable of all existed down in the later nineties and earlier years of the present century. We see half the money of intending purchasers regularly turned into the pockets of the private broker right in the state's own office. This was the payment for the service of finding "base" for lieu land selections, a function that should have been performed by the state which alone possessed the necessary data. And again an embezzlement of funds occurs, this time by a subordinate official in charge. Another fails so completely in keeping records that no statement is possible of the state's claims against tenants on farms reverted to it, nor is the account of the official with the state ascertainable.

Evidence seems overwhelming that the happenings to these land-sale moneys on their way to the state treasury were the natural and inevitable result of the same vitiating spirit that characterized the general land policy of the state at its worst. No comprehension of the public good represented in these resources existed, no imagination sufficed to see and set forth the realities for the public welfare that were being sacrificed.

Turning now to another source of treasury receipts, those coming from the national treasury, we are greeted with the revolting spectacle of the same Secretary of State, S. E. May, laying his hands on remittances of the five per cent proceeds of sales by the United States within the borders of Oregon. Five thousand four hundred and twenty-four dollars and twenty-five cents of these funds were appropriated by Mr. May to his own use in the later sixties.<sup>1</sup> The only other noteworthy circumstance relating to the inflow of funds from the national government is the failure so far of the state to secure reimbursement for expenditures by it during Civil War times to ward off depredations by the Indians.

<sup>1</sup>Report of the Investigating Commission, 1872, pp. 115-7.

2. Having glanced at some of the more significant happenings to public funds as they were being passed on into the state treasury we are now ready to direct our attention to the accumulated surpluses and balances in possession of the state treasurers and to note conditions with regard to them affecting the weal or woe of the Oregon people.

An economic management of this part of the commonwealth business would arrange to have always a small surplus in reservoir, as it were, to which inflows were adding and from which outflows in payments were taking place—and no leakage or diversion of funds occurring.

It will be remembered that the inflows were turned into three quite distinct reservoirs: One containing the general fund from the state tax levies; one the "trust funds," proceeds from the sales of certain lands; and the third the "land funds" accumulated out of other grants and of national land-sale funds turned over to the state. The general fund was drawn upon for all purposes; the trust funds, like the common school, the university and the agricultural college land funds, were to be irreducible, the principal being loaned and only the interest accruing used; the land funds were for application in works of internal improvement.

What degree of economy has been exhibited in the administration of Oregon's treasury accumulations? With regard to the general fund, normal conditions call for the maintenance of such an approximation to a balance between the revenues and disbursements, from year to year, that no large surplus of idle funds accumulates and that no deficit occurs involving embarrassment and the loss of the interest paid on warrants. Furthermore, the moneys representing the "balances on hand" should function normally as part of the general circulating medium or reserves, and earn interest for the people, through being entrusted with appropriate safeguards to banking depositaries.

The more serious lapses from normal conditions of the general fund administration of the Oregon state treasury are represented in the following:

(1) Huge accumulations of 1868-1870 and of 1897-1899, due to the failures of the legislative assemblies of these periods to make appropriations, though the revenues are collected as usual.

(2) Long continued deficits in the seventies, caused mainly through expenditures for public buildings while an old fixed rate of state levy sufficing only for current expenses was not increased.

(3) A treasury law that nominally enjoined the hoarding of the state funds at the capitol but under which the treasurers regularly loaned them and pocketed the interest income. Moreover, the individual claimants to whom bonds were issued, the holders of warrants during the bienniums for which no appropriations had been made, and the holders of warrants against anticipated land-sales funds—these would all have occasion to offer their paper at tempting bargains to those in charge of the surplus state funds. The profits to the treasurers would be the discount at which the claims were cashed plus the interest accruing on the bonds and warrants.

*The Congested Treasuries of 1868-1870 and 1896-1898.*—The legislative assembly of 1868 adjourned without passing the general appropriation bill. No special session was called. The annual state tax levies were continued, so during the two years up to the meeting of the legislature in regular biennial session in 1870 the state treasury became more and more congested. The regular state government establishment had of course to be maintained. The claims were audited by the secretary of state and warrants issued, but as the state treasurer had no authority through appropriations made to cash these warrants they bore interest at ten per cent until payment of them was ordered by the session of 1870. Since those furnishing services and supplies during these two years had to accept these dubious warrants and wait for legislative validation of them their charges were naturally raised accordingly. The legislative assembly of 1870, however, appointed an investigating commission to reaudit the claims upon which these



warrants were based. This commission in its report holds that it cut down all such bills to cash prices. It took the view that it was enough for the state to pay interest at ten per cent "without any such extraordinary increase of prices" as had been charged. Yet Governor Grover in 1876 speaks of the warrant indebtedness then existing as "greatly increased by the failure of the legislature of 1868 to make any appropriations for general current state expenses, leaving the state to be conducted on exorbitant and uncertain vouchers and unlawful warrants, and interest to accumulate in large amounts, while the revenues in the treasury were locked up and dormant."<sup>1</sup> The state treasurer's report for 1870 gives the following figures for the locked up funds in the treasury:

Receipts during the fiscal years of 1869 and 1870, including former balances reported to the legisla- tive assembly .....	\$404,530.28
Disbursements during this period.....	136,590.80
Leaving a balance in the treasury of.....	<u>\$267,939.48</u>

An even greater congestion of treasury funds was brought about again in 1897 and 1898. The legislative assembly that was to have met in January, 1897, failed to effect an organization. Enough of the members elect lent themselves to the machinations of the adherents to the candidates contesting for election to the United States Senate as to bring about this "legislative hold-up." A special session was not called until October, 1898. In the interim some \$729,000 of outstanding warrants were accumulated. The interest paid by the state on these amounted to about \$45,000.<sup>2</sup> As the law then stood this interest was easily turned into the pocket of the state treasurer. He had the funds lying idle in the treasury with

<sup>1</sup>Messages and Documents, 1876, p. 12. The State Supreme Court in 1871, held that it was illegal for Secretary of State to issue warrants to claimants under such conditions without appropriations. In 1897, however, this opinion was reversed and the Secretary of State was ordered to audit claims and draw warrants for all claims which "the Legislature has through its enactments permitted and directed, either expressly or impliedly."—*Brown v. Fleischer*, 4 Or. 132; *Shattuck v. Kincaid*, 31 Or. 379.

<sup>2</sup>State Treasurer's Report, 1899, p. 3.



which he could cash this three-quarters-of-a-million of warrants. The interest then accruing on them would be his own. He did not have to account to the state for it. His only risk turned upon the validation of these warrants by the succeeding session of the legislature. Such a grand opportunity for mutual advantage, for the warrant holders on the one side and the state treasurer on the other, would surely not be overlooked. Notwithstanding this striking demonstration of the diversion of interest earned by public funds because of the retention of a primitive treasury law, another decade was to elapse before legislation was enacted providing that the interest accruing on treasury surpluses should belong to the people.

*The Outstanding Warrants of the Seventies.*—The following statistics of the outstanding warrants reported by the state treasurers during the seventies are significant of further blundering, if of not something worse, in Oregon treasury legislation:

*Outstanding Warrants, Bearing Ten Per Cent Interest.*

1872 .....	\$ 76,883.69	1878 .....	192,975.62
1874 .....	287,559.00	1880 .....	20,337.76
1876 .....	289,665.01		

The sum reported in 1872 was mainly a residue of the unpaid indebtedness of the period preceding, 1868-1870. The deficits of subsequent periods were due to special expenditures for public buildings without any increase in the levy for state purposes.

In 1876 the state supreme court ruled that the general revenues of any biennial period could be applied only in meeting the expenses of that biennial and the deficit of the preceding period. This made it necessary to make a special levy for liquidating the accounts of longer standing represented by this outstanding warrant indebtedness. Accordingly, a special levy of three mills was made for the payment of these old warrants in addition to the regular four-mill levy for current expenses. This special three-mill levy was extended through four years, 1877-1880, inclusive.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Messages and Documents, 1876, pp. 11-12; *Simon v. Brown*, 6 Or. 285.

It was probably fortunate that a constitutional restriction prevented the funding of this floating indebtedness. The ten per cent interest which these warrants bore from the date of indorsement, "not paid for want of funds," increased by one-half the disbursement necessary to pay these deficits.

*The Public Treasury a Private Snare for Half-a-Century.*—The law governing the state treasury administration received only the slightest modification from the time of its enactment at the organization of the state government in 1859 until 1907. "The state treasurer shall keep his office at the seat of government" is the initial provision of this treasury code and it is representative of the ideas embodied in the law as a whole. Hoarding of the state money is made synonymous with its safe-keeping. There was a law on the pages of the statute books that made the loaning, with or without interest, of any public money "larceny." There was no anticipation that the business of the state would expand beyond the capacity of the leather purse of the treasurer.

Even after a treasury surplus had amounted to some \$300,000 it did not occur to the "Investigating Commission" of 1870 that the withdrawal of such a sum from the channels of trade in the then isolated and primitive Oregon meant monetary stringency and business embarrassment. This body held that the treasurer who had been found guilty of "depositing" some \$200,000 of this surplus with the strongest banks of the state should be punished for "felony." The statute forbidding the loaning of state funds by the treasurer was already a dead letter.<sup>1</sup> Yet when it became an open secret that the state treasurers were gaining rich swags from this source no sense of public right inspired anyone to move for securing the interest thus earned to the tax-payers who had furnished the principal.

When a system of depositories was provided in 1907 speculating schemers were still loth to relinquish the idea of using the treasurer, who was probably beholden to them for elec-

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<sup>1</sup>Report of Investigating Commission, 1870, pp. 58-62.

tion expenses, as a tool in securing control of surplus state funds for private gain.<sup>1</sup>

An interesting episode in the history of the financing of the state treasurer's office took place in the early seventies. The state constitution had fixed the treasurer's salary at eight hundred dollars and had provided further that there should be no "fees or perquisites whatever for the performance of any duties connected" with any of the state offices. At the first session of the state legislature "the act to regulate the Treasury Department" provided "a private secretary" for the governor and an assistant to the secretary of state, allowing each a salary of four hundred dollars. The state treasurer was left without aid until 1870, when the office of "Assistant Treasurer of State" was created. The "joker" in this measure is found in the provision for the compensation for the services of this assistant treasurer. For this purpose the state treasurer was to have one-half per cent of all moneys received and one-half per cent "of all disbursements made by him." As the treasurer had the power of appointing his assistant it is natural to suppose that he would see to it that the difference between his own salary of \$800 and the compensation provided for his clerk would be "equitably adjusted." This means of drawing compensation from the public funds was cut off through the repeal of the law providing for the "Assistant Treasurer of State" in 1874.<sup>2</sup> More surreptitious devices had again to be resorted to that the office of the state treasurer might yield a respectable income.

*Oregon's State Auditing—The Plan and How It Has Worked.*—The features in simplest form of a state auditing system that might be fairly effective in conserving public funds would include: (1) Adequate provision for enforcing the turning into the state treasury of all receipts of state money from whatsoever source—taxes, sale of public property, pay-

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<sup>1</sup>See history of relations between state treasurer and Title Guarantee and Trust Company, given in public press of Oregon, 1907.

<sup>2</sup>This law netted the treasurer during the four years, \$13,543.20. Report of Commissioners of Investigation, p. 196.

ments for services. (2) An agency, responsible, competent and disinterested, requiring closely itemized vouchers for all claims and limiting disbursements to those authorized by law, so that no money leaves the treasury except to whom it is due.

That conditions of fiscal safety require the turning of all receipts into the state treasury has never been keenly realized in Oregon, nor until very recently strictly adhered to. Mention has already been made of the embezzlements by Secretary of State S. E. May, in the later sixties. But he not only appropriated the remittances from Washington of the five per cent proceeds from the sales of government land in Oregon and receipts from the sales of state lands, but he took also receipts from sales of state publications and moneys sent to support patients at the state asylum.<sup>1</sup> It was pointed out also how the Board of School Land Commissioners during the seventies spent a large share of the receipts from the land sales without authority of law and with practically no returns to the state.

The traditional administration of Oregon's state institutions has left much to be desired. It has never been standardized. Such men of talent, system and conscience as have been connected with them have had to work under such deterring handicaps that they failed to elevate conditions to a higher plane. The report of the Investigating Commission of 1870 goes into details of slipshod practices and petty grafting. These institutions have been in the care of a board composed of the governor, secretary of state and state treasurer. These officials until a few years ago were themselves the beneficiaries of a system of fees and perquisites that, to say the least, if not unconstitutional, was unwarranted under the constitution—and then, too, fee systems are inevitably abused. With the supervisory board in such position there was not fostered in it the spirit of strict surveillance over the policies and practices of its appointees. The foundations of not a few fortunes

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<sup>1</sup>Report of Investigating Commission, 1870, pp. 73-118.

have been laid through practices, shrewd and legal of course, but amounting essentially to a swindling of the public and impositions upon their charges. As recent as 1905 the secretary of state was still pleading for the legal requirement of the payment of all proceeds from sale of public property into the state treasury for the credit of the general fund and for annual itemized reports covering the same.

The secretary of state has from the beginning had the responsibility of auditing claims against the state. His has been the duty of seeing that no payment is made except it is provided for by law. However, the requirement of itemized vouchers through which this result could be insured was not in all cases enforced until 1895. Requisitions of governing boards were honored without vouchers. H. R. Kincaid as secretary of state, instituted this reform, holding that without the itemized voucher there was not strict compliance with a fair construction of the law.

The best service as auditor and some of the other duties required of the Oregon secretary of state do not harmonize. As a member of various commissions and boards having charge of the principal state institutions, excepting the penitentiary, he is required to enter into large contracts for the construction of public buildings and the purchase of supplies for public institutions, while as auditor he audits the claims against the state for contracts and supplies he has a voice in authorizing. He is charged with the sole duty of purchasing and authorizing all supplies for the several departments, capitol building and grounds, purchasing legislative supplies, and is also custodian of the capitol building and grounds. As auditor, it is his duty to audit and issue warrants in payment of claims incurred by his sole authority. If the function of auditing claims against the state is to be the distinctive responsibility of the secretary of state he should be relieved of his duties as a member of the various administrative boards and of his stewardship of the capitol and the activities within its walls and on the capitol grounds. Supervising care of the

state's institutions of charity and correction is becoming a task of such proportions as to justify the creation of a state board of control. The organization of the system of control now in operation lacks, in a wide range of its affairs, the essential principle of check and supervision of one official over another.

The auditing of the account between the state treasurer and the state is also imposed upon the secretary of state. He is "to carefully examine semi-annually the books and accounts of the treasurer and the moneys on hand in the treasury, and immediately thereupon report the result of such examination in writing to the governor, specifying therein the amount and kinds of funds particularly." And further, "he shall keep an account between the state and the treasurer, and therein charge the treasurer with the balance in the treasury when he came into office, and with all moneys received by him, credit him with all moneys paid by him pursuant to law." To make the semi-annual examination of "the books and accounts of the treasurer" effective he must necessarily use his own "account between the state and the treasurer" with which to check up the treasurer's accounts. The confession in the secretary of state's report for 1901 is that up to that time the disbursement account of the treasurer had been obtained in the form of "a verbal statement of the disbursements from the various funds."<sup>1</sup> The secretary's report for 1872 had been particularly frank about this requirement made of the secretary of state "to keep an account between the state and the state treasurer." He held that it was "utterly impossible, unless the secretary copies the treasurer's books . . . if the secretary were a good copyist the accounts of the two officials could be made to agree admirably; but I am unable to see what good purpose would be served by it. I take the liberty, therefore, to ask that the provision of the law under consideration be repealed. Let the secretary of state keep his own books accurately, and no others." The above statement, made in 1872, also claimed that "payments of interest on loans are constantly being made

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<sup>1</sup>Report of Secretary of State, 1901, pp. 49-51.



to the treasurer of which the secretary knows nothing; and, on the other hand, the treasurer is just as constantly paying out interest on warrants, etc., of which the secretary is equally ignorant."<sup>1</sup> When this matter of the account between the treasurer and the state was referred to again, nearly thirty years later, there was no complaint regarding the receipt side of the account. The requirement of the secretary of state that he countersign the official receipt sufficed for getting a record of all of the treasurer's receipts. But evidently for more than forty years this account between the treasurer and the state was a mere farce, for the secretary of state had no means of obtaining a record of the treasurer's payments. Secre-Secretary Dunbar in securing the filing of all warrants as soon as paid and the keeping of a warrant account remedied this defect.<sup>2</sup>

*Trust Fund Administration.*—The treasury administration of trust funds involves activities quite distinct from those needed for the care of the general fund. Collection, safe-keeping and disbursement are the stages in the process of handling the moneys in the general fund. But the accumulations of the irreducible trust funds are to be loaned, collected and re-loaned, the interest income only being disbursed. There is, however, a still deeper basis for the contrasts exhibited between the administrative history of the trust funds and that of the general fund. These arise out of the fact of difference of source and of the use of these two classes of funds. The moneys of the trust funds are not taken out of the pockets of tax-payers as such, but are given in exchange for lands that were gifts to the state by the national government. Furthermore, the trust funds are not applied to meet exigent needs of preserving order, protecting rights of persons and property, establishing justice and promoting material welfare, but only the income of these funds is available for advancing the intelligence of the rising generation. Because the trust fund

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<sup>1</sup>Secretary of State's Report, 1872, pp. IX-X.

<sup>2</sup>Secretary of State's Report, 1901, pp. 49-51.

moneys are thus the same as found and are used for needs less universally and less keenly felt, the vigilance and the conscience applied in the care of them are more yielding. Losses to them have occurred in divers ways, mainly through poorly secured loans; while these were deplored, nobody was held accountable to restore the sums that had vanished.

The amounts of cash in the treasury belonging to the different trust funds are regularly reported, also the securities belonging to these funds; but no accumulation account is offered. No emphasis is put on the limits reached year by year by these accumulating irreducible funds.

In the discussion of the sale of Oregon's lands it was recounted how, through shameless policies in the disposition of the indemnity school lands, the possibility of securing a magnificent endowment for the common schools was sacrificed. We are here concerned only with indicating the spirit with which the comparatively meagre proceeds have been administered. Statements characterizing conditions in which these funds were found at three successive periods must suffice.

The Investigating Commission of 1870 charged the Board of School Land Commissioners of the preceding period with loaning the common school and university funds on inadequate security; and with neglect to enforce prompt payment of the interest on these school and university fund notes. The testimony of the clerk of the board then in charge was that he had learned through inquiries sent to the treasurers of the different counties "that in some counties, for instance, Benton and Yamhill, large sums had been loaned from the funds mentioned, which the state was likely to lose, owing to inadequate security." In one county the loss was estimated to amount to one-half of the funds loaned. In several counties the notes had been allowed to run a long time, and the interest had been permitted to accumulate without any payments being made.

The language of the report of the Committee of Investigation of 1878 in characterizing the administration of the edu-

cational funds during the preceding eight years is particularly severe:

"It is the opinion of the committee that the school fund, as it appears in the report of the board is not worth fifty cents on the dollar.

"That this magnificent educational fund has been depleted about one-half by criminal carelessness and wilful neglect of duty, within the past eight years, is beyond question. While the members of the board may not be subject to a criminal prosecution, yet, in righteous indignation an outraged people should remember it against them."<sup>1</sup>

The insolvency developed by the hard times of the nineties might be expected to exhibit itself in connection with the school fund loans. The governor's message for 1897 in speaking of the "loans of the school fund" has the following:

"In connection with the state lands, it needs to be mentioned that loans of the school funds, in many instances, owing to the hard times and over-valuation of the land, have proven bad investments and entailed losses upon the school fund. In many of these loans the borrowers have defaulted in payment of interest, and the state has been compelled to take the security and to pay the cost of foreclosure. These judgments represent, in addition to the principal loaned and the costs of suit, a large accumulation of interest. . . . Another source of loss and annoyance is the sale of land for taxes two or three years overdue, without notice to the board, thus entailing further expenses in redeeming them."<sup>2</sup> Experience like this last exhibits a strange lack of co-ordination of effort among some of Oregon's public servants.

The governor's message of 1903 reports 162 farms on hand on January first, 1901, acquired through foreclosure of mortgages given to secure school fund loans. Thirty-eight were acquired during the biennium and eighty-one sold, leaving seventy-three owned by the state at the time of the report. In

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<sup>1</sup>Report of the Committee of Investigation, 1878, pp. 26-7.

<sup>2</sup>Governor's message, 1897, p. 18.

1905 the report to the legislative committee to investigate the books and accounts of the state land agent the expert clerks say: "We are unable to find a starting point from which to begin to check the accounts between the present time and April 1st, 1899. (The time at which the farms were turned over to the State Land Agent). "It is our opinion that a system of bookkeeping should be maintained in the office of the State Land Agent that would show the system upon which the business is handled, and the results, whether good or bad, in relation to the school fund. Up to date there seems to have been no attempt to keep such a set of books."<sup>1</sup>

The rising school fund was a favorite subject of notice by Oregon governors. They seem to have been content, however, so long as the inflow at the top was in excess of the leakage at the bottom. An ex-governor in his statement before the same investigating committee of 1905 attributes the confusion then existing in the state's land business to "the very imperfect manner in which the records of the Land Office of this state have been kept for thirty years."

The administration of the school fund tested with regard to its being kept loaned and producing an income makes a fairly good showing. Until the early years of the present century the idle balances of cash on hand were due to excessively high rate of interest prescribed to the board in charge of the fund. In 1903, however, the unloaned balance amounted to nearly one-third of the whole fund, and there was no maladjustment in rate of interest prescribed to necessitate such a condition.

*Land Funds Administration.*—The proceeds from the sales of the internal improvement grant of 500,000 acres, of the swamp land grant, of the tide lands, and the five per cent of the proceeds of sales by the national government of lands within Oregon, comprised the moneys going into the land funds. These were like the trust funds in that they were easily ac-

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<sup>1</sup>Report of Committee to Investigate Books and Accounts of State Land Agent, 1905, pp.

quired, but unlike those funds in that the principal and not the interest income alone from them was available for disbursements. They were not "irreducible."

The land funds, or the very prospect of funds from the state grants, were enough to engage the plotting of those facile in beguiling legislatures to subsidize plausible schemes for internal improvement from which the schemers alone would reap the harvests. From 1876 on a conspicuous item in the financial statements of Oregon is that of outstanding warrants payable from different land funds as proceeds of land sales became available. The accumulation of these funds was anticipated and, as the astounding size of the element of accrued interest in connection with the outstanding warrant liabilities indicate, the appropriations for the internal improvement schemes had been made years in advance of the realization of the moneys from land sales. Yea, transfers had even to be made from the general fund account to effect the final liquidation of these liabilities.

The following statistics of outstanding land fund warrants tell pretty plainly their own story:

1876—"Outstanding Wagon Road Warrants, payable out of Swamp, Tide, Overflowed, 5 per cent U. S. Land Sale Funds and other Funds" . . . . .	\$109,154.00
1878—"Wagon Road Warrants, payable out of Swamp, Overflowed, Tide, 5 per cent U. S. Land Sale, and other Land Funds" . . . . .	138,600.00
1880—"Wagon Road Warrants, payable out of Swamp, Overflowed, Tide, 5 per cent U. S. Land Sale and other Land Funds" . . . . .	134,304.00
1882—"Wagon Road Warrants, payable out of Swamp, Overflowed, Tide, 5 per cent U. S. Land Sale and other Land Funds" . . . . .	116,876.05
1884—"Wagon Road Warrants, payable out of Swamp, Overflowed, Tide, 5 per cent U. S. Land and other Land Funds" . . . . .	83,859.45

1886—"Wagon Road Warrants, payable out of Swamp, Overflowed, Tide, 5 per cent U. S. Land Sale and other Land Funds" .....	33,500.00
1888—"Wagon Road Warrants, payable out of Swamp, Overflowed, Tide, 5 per cent U. S. Land Sale and other Land Funds".....	15,500.00
Wagon Road Warrants, accrued interest to Jan- uary 1, 1889 .....	18,695.57
All of the above listed warrants bore ten per cent interest.	
1890—Warrants bearing 8 per cent interest— "Swamp Land Warrants, payable out of the Swamp Land Fund, Principal".....	\$20,205.96
Accrued interest to January 1, 1889.....	6,359.87
From 1892 until 1898, inclusive, this outstanding warrants account stood as the nominal sum of...	669.95
But the 1900 report has an "Outstanding Swamp Land Fund Warrants Account" caused by state's selling as swamp lands tracts to which it was not able to give the purchasers title and so repaid them with these warrants:	
8 per cent interest warrants.....	30,925.38
6 per cent interest warrants.....	5,994.50

Had the projects promoted by this peculiar financiering been well-advised, securing the construction of greatly needed public works, and had the outlays been applied economically and efficiently, the policy of the state with its land funds might have been justified. But almost without exception the schemes were pure frauds and the moneys obtained from the lands were the same as thrown away. The verdict is justified that pronounces the internal improvement land grants to Oregon a curse to the state.



## CHAPTER II

### BUDGETARY PRACTICE IN OREGON

Until the system of direct legislation was instituted in Oregon a few years ago its legislative assembly, acting upon suggestions from the governor and the secretary of state, had full and final control of its budgetary activities. The bringing of the legislative authority here so near to the doom of a taboo is due most of all to its budgetary failings. It should be interesting to note how this repudiation of the legislature on account of budgetary abuses came about.

That any representative law-making body may make regular and consistent progress in this most important part of its work conditions must obtain that foster the exercise of its best intelligence and call forth highest motives. The development of budgetary procedure, more and more nearly rational and adapted to conditions existing, calls for presentation of a clear and orderly scheme of revenues and expenditures, a careful study of it by a select group, and an open and full discussion before the legislative body as a whole. Peculiar untoward and heretofore unalterable influences in Oregon have barred the way to the introduction of these requisites for the improvement of its budgetary practice. The confirmed attitude of the average Oregon voter from the beginning has discouraged a calm and reasonable handling of the budget by the legislature. The only good budget in his judgment was one with the most parsimonious public expenditures—or at least which he could be hoodwinked into believing was parsimonious. Retrenchment was the only laudable public service. The constitutionally fixed salaries, including those of the legislators, express a perverted sense of worthlessness of public service. These beggarly sums still stand intact in the text of the constitution and virtually exclude the idea that the government can be anything but a necessary evil. This disparaging valuation of the public servants tended to blind the

people and the officials themselves to an appreciation of the possible worth of public service.

This bias of the Oregon people has proven ineradicable. Time and time again the Oregon voters have evinced it. A fair interpretation of the repeated negative votes on proposals to give officials reasonable compensation, of the long toleration of the vicious system of fees and perquisites, of the appropriation by the state treasurers of the interest on the public funds, gives the strongest ground for the inference that the average Oregon voter has preferred that his public servants should steal rather than legitimately receive a fair compensation.

Another form in which this delusion that all public expenditures were so much unproductive consumption exhibited itself was the dread of a legislative session. Contemporary expressions of the public press prove most forcibly that legislatures in session were veritable *bête noires*. They meant public expenditures for which taxes would be levied. And it is fair to say for the average citizen that for him this, in truth, was about all there was to it.

With this aversion to the very idea of public expenditures, amounting to an obsession, the people created what they felt, or were led to believe, would give them the highest degree of immunity from public outlays. This series of supposed safeguards against the expansion of public expenditures, through which they believed their grip on the public purse strings would be effective, were first, a virtually fixed rate of state levies down to 1885. When this device proved its frailty for this purpose, and they had to let go of it, systematic and increasing undervaluation of their property for taxation was relied upon to defeat the aim of higher state levies to secure larger state revenues. But all was in vain. The professional office-seeker, the despoiler of the public treasury and of the public heritage easily executed flank movements that defeated the purpose of the people with their supposed safeguards. Systems of fees and perquisites were created, imperial areas of public

domain were secured for a song as "swamp" lands, hundreds of thousands of dollars of land funds were grabbed under the guise of "wagon road grants."

The attitude of the Oregon people blindly staking their security against public expenditures upon starvation salaries for public officials, fixed state levies, and low assessors' valuations, only fostered finesse and subterfuge among the professional office-seeker, and the grafting lobbyist. How completely the people delivered themselves into the hands of the public despoiler is exhibited in the main feature of Oregon's budgetary procedure in use from 1885 on. For the fixed levy was substituted an adjustable rate determined by a board consisting of the governor, secretary of state and state treasurer. This board, after a legislative assembly has adjourned, simply adds up the expenditures authorized through appropriations made and, with valuations in hand returned by the county clerks, computes rate necessary to meet liabilities of the state. The legislature is thus absolutely free from worry as to how its appropriations are to be met. Only the watch-dog proclivities of individual members stand in the way of the forty-day sessions being converted into more or less of an orgy of log-rolling. Even before 1885, while a traditional fixed levy was adhered to deficiencies were caused compelling the raising of the continuing levy a notch or two.

Of course the average legislator has been a representative man, anxious to serve his constituents. As a member of the committee of ways and means he is alert to use his best judgment. But he is at a tremendous disadvantage. The secretary of state's table of estimates is too general to be of any practical use. It is unsupported by any explanations. The average member is generally an utter stranger to the state establishment of institutions. No traditional mode of procedure with which he can learn real needs to be provided from public treasury is available. No competent and authorized and generally responsible guide is at hand. He is at sea and remains so during the crowded session while besieged by the

heads of the various institutions urging largely increased appropriations, and by other agencies clamoring for state aid.

This predicament of the members of the legislatures, accentuated as the affairs of the state are year by year attaining increasing complexity, was realized by the legislative assembly of 1909 and it provided a joint hold-over committee to prepare a budget for the institutions at the capital, or at least a report as the result of its investigations to be made the basis for a budget. Such a body using a few days just preceding the next session for its work would not find the way out to a satisfactory budgetary procedure. The most promising suggestion for Oregon is a State Board of Finance consisting of the governor, secretary of state and state treasurer. These have positions on all the different boards of control of the different state institutions. They also constitute a majority of the state tax commission. To these the reports of all heads of institutions should be made. With these alone the legislative committees of ways and means should confer. The governor should have power of partial veto of appropriation bills. With authority and responsibility centralized in those who are in position to become acquainted with the needs supplied from the state treasury, and with the right of hearings before the committees of ways and means and before the two houses accorded the members of this board of finance, the two houses of the legislature with suitable parliamentary procedure in the discussion and passage of the budget, should be able to carry out the will of the people.

LETTER IDENTIFYING THE "FOUNTAIN" ON POWDER  
RIVER, AT WHICH MR. OGDEN CAMPED IN  
SETTING OUT ON EXPEDITION  
1828-1829

Baker, Ore., June 15, 1911.

F. G. Young, Esq.,

Eugene, Ore.

Dear Mr. Young:

In the Quarterly just received, p. 382, December number, is a note inquiring for the locality of "The Fountain" where Mr. Ogden camped September 30th, 1828.

I think that this was the "Cold Spring" on the farm of Mr. D. H. Shaw, known as "The Cold Spring Ranch," on the Powder River, six miles due south of Baker City, at the junction of Beaver Creek.

Mr. Ogden probably camped on the night of September 29th on the Powder River between Baker and Haines—the fact that he only made about 12 miles the next day could be accounted for by the fact that there is a beautiful little valley at that point with abundant grass for horses, and evidently he was in a beaver country, as it is said that beavers were still within two miles of that point a couple of years ago. The fact that one trap caught eleven beavers shows that they must have been in camp during the afternoon. At this point the old trail to Nevada turns off on Beaver Creek, a mile above its junction with Powder River. In the early seventies wagons would come along that trail with ten horses, and the troops brought Gatling guns over it during the War of 1878.

While the regular *wagon* road turned off from Burnt River and crossed by Virtue Flat, there was an old trail for pack horses that continued up Burnt River and crossed to Beaver Creek. It necessitated leaving Burnt River in places and climbing up on the hills to avoid obstructions as the canyon is narrow, which would account for the remark October 2, "a hilly country."

This would appear to make every reference fit with the locality. Mr. Ogden started from the junction of the Powder and North Powder and made an ordinary journey, with detours on account of the swamps in the valley, making an ordinary journey 20 to 30 miles and camping a few miles north of Baker September 29th, the next day going only as far as the Cold Spring, where there was an abundance of grass and beavers—but sending on two parties, one to push on for the rest of the day toward Burnt River, the other to strike across to Malheur—then the next day he would cross by way of Beaver Creek to a tributary of Burnt River.

From diligent inquiry among old settlers, I can find no other well known spring.

Very truly yours,

J. NEILSON BARRY.



## EXCERPTS AND NOTES

### A CONSTRUCTIVE POLICY WITH THE REMAINING OREGON LANDS PROPOSED

Governor Oswald West in his inaugural message, announced a departure from the traditional Oregon custom followed in the selection of its indemnity school lands. Instead of waiting until a request for a selection is made by an intending purchaser of a designated tract, the governor proposes to arrange, if possible, with the national authorities to take a compact tract composed of contiguous sections from the Cascade Forest Reservation. The area preferred would comprise the drainage basin of some stream with large undeveloped power resources. This project of the governor has in view experimental state forestry and power administration.

Oregon is now entitled to some 50,000 acres of these indemnity lands. Should the selection be consummated as proposed, the care of the lands would naturally be entrusted to the students of the state institutions of higher education. This is part of the governor's suggestion.

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### THE GREAT MEMORIAL ISSUE OF THE DAILY OREGONIAN.

The semi-centennial memorial number of the first issue of the daily Oregonian of February 4 makes a noteworthy historical document. In it are found many historical papers of permanent value, reprints of early views of Portland and photographic reprints of early issues of the Oregonian. The illustrative and printed material of the sixty-four large pages constitute a veritable doomsday book record of Oregon's present development.

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### "LONE TREE ON OREGON TRAIL"

Omaha World-Herald.

In the early days of Merrick County during the fifties, there stood on the north bank of the Platte River south of what is now Central City, a giant cottonwood tree. This tree was close to the old Oregon trail, and for miles up and down the river there was not another tree to be found. Under its spreading

branches emigrant trains halted for rest to escape the heat of the day under its beneficent shade. It came to be known to the early travelers of the plain as the Lone Tree.

Finally its branches withered and its trunk rotted and the old tree fell down, and the spot where it stood was almost forgotten. A short time ago a move was set on foot by the old settlers to set up some suitable mark on the spot where the Lone Tree stood, and the matter has been taken before the county board of supervisors. A marble shaft will be set up. On the shaft will be the simple words, "Here stood the old Lone Tree on the Oregon Trail."—Reprinted from *The Morning Oregonian*, Monday, January 9, 1911.

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#### FLAX CULTURE IN EARLY DAYS.

The following interesting and valuable item of economic history is reprinted from columns of *The Morning Oregonian* of January 17, 1911:

"I wish to add my personal plea for the culture of flax. The whole subject has been ably and enthusiastically discussed in the columns of *The Oregonian*, nor am I qualified to speak upon its merits. But I remember that my father, who was a practical farmer, raised most satisfactory crops of flax in Polk County more than 35 years ago. The fiber was not utilized then, but the seed was sold in Salem to Joseph Holman, who managed a mill for the expressing of oil. The byproduct of oil cake was returned to the grower, and was most valuable for feeding young cattle.

"As there seems no doubt of the exceptional quality of the Oregon-grown flax, it is to be hoped the farmers will look with favor upon this profitable industry and that flourishing linen mills, twine manufactories, etc., will reward those who have labored so faithfully for their establishment.

"Some day the small farmer—if there is one—in Eastern Oregon and Washington will consider the cultivation of flax, for that section is its habitat. A few years ago I found some fine specimens growing wild in the sagebrush, six miles from

Walla Walla, and it certainly is not confined to that locality. When Lewis and Clark made their great journey more than 100 years ago, they found the Clatsop Indians using flax or hemp fishlines, and were told they obtained it by barter with their neighbors, east of the Cascades.

"These simple, primitive people were wise in gaining secrets from Mother Earth and utilized for food and use the plants that grew within the confines of their nomadic lives. That they understood, in a crude way, the retting and hackling of flax and hemp is very clearly proven by examining bags made by the Wascos, Klickitats, Warm Springs, Cayuse, Umatillas and other tribes. Any good collection of baskets will have these. Being much on horseback, nothing could be better adapted to their use than these strong, durable, pliable and beautifully-woven bags, or pouches. Their love of color and beauty wove a decoration, on the flax foundation, of finely split corn husk, in its natural tone, or dyed with alder bark or copper.

"Either cultivation of vast areas has destroyed much of the native plants, or the degeneracy of their handiwork has made it less arduous to use the Boston man's cheap twine. The delicate blue of the lovely flax 'blushes unseen' in the gray waste of sagebrush, and the sturdy hemp by the creeks is ungarnered. Lucky is the possessor of the finely wrought and enduring pouches. Some day it will grow again, more vigorous and abundant, under intelligent cultivation.

"Farming methods are too advanced for enlightened men to waste time and labor with unsatisfactory crops—if other things make profitable returns, then let us consider them.

"HARRIET M'ARTHUR."

(NOTE.—Flaxseed was brought across the plains to Oregon from Indiana in 1844 by James Johnson and planted near Lafayette, Yamhill County, the following year, and it grew well. The fiber was prepared and woven into towels and other articles for domestic use in the winter of 1845-46 by Mrs. Juliet Johnson on a loom made by her husband. John Killin, a pioneer of 1845, raised flax on his farm in Clackamas County, a few miles east of Hubbard, and his wife made towels and bedticks out of the fiber prior to 1860. A towel made by Mrs. Killin is in the possession of the Oregon Historical Society.—George H. Himes.)

THE OLDEST SEEDLING APPLE TREE IN THE PACIFIC  
NORTHWEST

The present intense interest in the development of the apple growing industry in the Pacific Northwest tends to invest the oldest apple trees of this region with something of a halo. The tender care with which the now historic tree in the reservation at Vancouver, Washington, will be fostered is but an admirable instance of the correct—the ever-enhancing worth of memorials.

The romantic story associated with the bearing of the seeds for the Vancouver apple trees from London to the Columbia lends a charm to this lone survivor; but if our interest is in the lineal ancestry of a great and growing industry ought we not to erect a monument about half a mile north of Milwaukie to the memory of Henderson Luelling where he and his son Alfred planted the seven hundred or more grafted fruit trees known as the "Traveling Nursery," which they brought across the plains from Henry County, Iowa, in 1847?

The story of the identification of the Vancouver tree as it appeared in *The Morning Oregonian* of January 22, 1911, is as follows:

"Vancouver Barracks, Wash., Jan. 21.—The discovery this week of the oldest apple tree in the Northwest, which has borne fruit for more than eighty years, has aroused much interest, and hundreds have visited the post just to see the tree with a remarkable record.

"Colonel George K. McGunnege, commander of the post, as soon as he was convinced by A. A. Quarnberg, district fruit inspector, that this tree was planted eighty-five years ago, gave orders to have it preserved. A suitable fence around the base of the tree will be built, and a stone monument, with a short history of its remarkable record, will be placed in the enclosure. Relic hunters who desire a piece of the tree will be severely punished if caught marring the oldest inhabitant of any apple orchard in the Northwest.

"The fact that this tree, after eighty years of bearing, should bear fruit each year, is regarded as of the utmost importance to the apple-raising industry in the Northwest.

"This tree is located in the southwest corner of the reservation, in front of the chief commissary's office. So little was thought of the scrubby-looking relic of bygone days that it was used to anchor a guy wire to. This has been removed.

"The tree is sixteen inches in diameter and about twenty feet high."

(NOTE.—Mrs. Narcissa Prentiss Whitman, one of the two first American women to cross the plains to Oregon, arrived at the Hudson's Bay Company's Fort Vancouver on September 12, 1836, and her husband, Dr. Marcus Whitman, and her traveling companions—Rev. Henry H. Spalding, Mrs. Eliza Hart Spalding and William H. Gray—were entertained by Dr. John McLoughlin, Chief Factor of the Hudson's Bay Company. Mrs. Whitman, in her diary under the date above mentioned, made the following entry:

"What a delightful place this is; what a contrast to the rough, barren sand plains through which we have so recently passed. Here we find fruit of every description—apples, peaches, grapes, pears, plums, and fig trees in abundance; also cucumbers, melons, beans, peas, beets, cabbage, tomatoes, and every kind of vegetable, too numerous to be mentioned. Every part is very neat and tastefully arranged, with fine walks, lined on each side with strawberry vines. At the opposite end of the garden is a good summer house covered with grape vines. Here I must mention the origin of these grapes and apples. A gentleman, twelve years ago, while at a party in London, put the seeds of the grapes and apples which he ate into his vest pocket; soon afterwards he took a voyage to this country and left them here, and now they are greatly multiplied."—George H. Himes.)

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#### TWO EMINENT OREGONIANS DIE.

General Owen Summers, who died on January 21, will have a prominent and honored place in Oregon's military annals. When a mere youth he joined the northern army as a cavalryman from Illinois. He was lieutenant-colonel of the First Infantry, Oregon National Guard, at the opening of the War with Spain. He was made colonel of the Oregon regiment when it volunteered to go into the field and served with such distinction throughout the campaign in the Philippines as to win the recognition of the president and promotion to the rank of brigadier-general.

The death of ex-Governor William P. Lord on February 7, closed the career of a faithful and able publicist. He graduated from Fairfield College in 1860 and enlisted as captain of a Delaware company and rose to the rank of major. After the close of the war he took up the study of law and completed the course at the Albany Law College. He again joined the army and came to the Pacific Coast as a member of the Second Artillery of the regular army. He resigned and opened a law office in Salem in 1868. Elected to the state senate, he served only two years, as he was promoted to the office of justice of the supreme court of Oregon in 1880. He was re-elected in 1882 and again in 1888. He became governor in 1895. At the close of his term in 1899 he was appointed minister to Argentine Republic. He returned to Oregon in 1905, during the later years of his life compiling the Oregon Code of 1911.









# THE OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

ORGANIZED DECEMBER 17, 1898

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The Rise and Early History  
*of*  
Political Parties  
*in*  
Oregon-III

*By* Walter Carleton Woodward

CHAPTER VI  
THE KANSAS-NEBRASKA BILL IN  
OREGON POLITICS



## CHAPTER VI

### THE KANSAS-NEBRASKA BILL IN OREGON POLITICS

The anti-Negro sentiment in Oregon was emphatic. The anti-slavery provision of the Ordinance of 1787 had been incorporated in the articles of compact of the Provisional Government. It had been inserted in the organic act by which Oregon became a Territory of the United States. In 1853 Judge Williams<sup>1</sup> awarded freedom to certain Negroes held as slaves on the ground that slavery did not and could not exist in Oregon. The decision seemed obvious and was accepted as final. Likewise, the first session of the legislature of the Provisional Government had passed an act prohibiting the presence of free Negroes within the field of its jurisdiction. The measure was re-enacted by the first Territorial legislature. It was only by a special act of the legislature of '52-'53 that George Washington, a colored man of high standing, was allowed to reside in the Territory.<sup>2</sup> Clearly, as a matter of policy, the people of Oregon repudiated most emphatically all relations with the Negro, bond or free. Far separated from the arena of sectional strife, they had no thought of interfering with the Negro question or of allowing it to interfere with them. They were very willing, indeed, to "let slavery alone."

This was the situation in distant Oregon up to the year 1854. Then, as by the hand of a magician, the scene was suddenly changed. The sense of security against the black evil was succeeded by uncertainty, if not positive alarm. Agitation succeeded equanimity. Political reorganization began at once to meet new and threatening conditions. Within a few short years, the slavery question was the paramount issue in the Territory and Oregon was shaken with the violence of conflict. Such was the result, directly and indirectly, of the passage by Congress, May 22, 1854, of the Kansas-Nebraska bill, which

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<sup>1</sup>Judge Williams, in *Oregon Historical Quarterly* for March, 1901, pp. 5, 6. Nathaniel Ford, of Polk County, had brought with him from Missouri in 1845 as slaves, a man named Robbin and family, and held them in servitude in Oregon. Robbin sued for their liberty by writ of habeas corpus.

<sup>2</sup>See *Statesman*, December 18, 1852. A petition for the special enactment, with 113 names subscribed, was presented to the legislature. Washington, an early pioneer, was a man of means and had generously assisted needy immigrants.

violated the spirit of the Ordinance of 1787, repealed the Missouri Compromise and, through the fiction of popular sovereignty, threw open the territories to slavery. No better example can be had of the far-reaching consequence of the recognition of the Kansas-Nebraska principle and of the promulgation of doctrines which grew out of it. Oregon, far out on the North Pacific, with conditions and interests wholly foreign to those within the arena of conflict, is forced, against her will, to become embroiled in the bitter contest. This, in the face of the imperious demand of the South addressed to the North—"Why can't you let slavery alone?" The far-reaching effects of the injection of this foreign issue into Oregon politics, it will be the purpose of this and succeeding chapters to show.

The same day on which the Washington County Whig convention passed a resolution condemning the policy of the proposed Kansas-Nebraska measure, the regular Democratic view was voiced by the Yamhill County Democratic convention. The delegates to the latter announced that they had not read with indifference the debates in the United States Senate on the subject of popular sovereignty in the territories, and expressed the hope that the time had fully arrived when the citizens of a territory were no longer to be considered the property of the United States.<sup>1</sup> How apt an expression of the old desire for local independence—of hostility to all superimposed authority! In the same spirit, the Democratic Territorial convention of the following year hailed the enactment "which restored to the people of the territories, their rights as American citizens."<sup>2</sup> The principle of popular sovereignty had a different and far greater significance to most Oregon Democrats, than its mere relation to the slavery question. They pushed the doctrine to its logical conclusion at once. To them it meant the fulfillment of their hopes and demands for complete self-government; for election of all Territorial officers. It meant the end of imported officials.

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<sup>1</sup>Statesman, May 23, 1854.

<sup>2</sup>Statesman, April 17, 1855.

The Democratic papers were prompt to defend the new doctrine.<sup>1</sup> "The clamor of repeal may be raised," said Bush, "but the step is taken and Democracy never recedes."<sup>2</sup> Yet he found it advisable to conciliate and reassure the skeptical. In an editorial, "The Nebraska Bill a Measure for African Freedom," he argued ingeniously that the measure would have no tendency to implant slavery in the new territories, from which it was excluded by nature; that the repeal of the Missouri Compromise would mollify the South, which, being no longer on the defensive, would inaugurate a policy of gradual emancipation.<sup>3</sup> Such was the vividness of Democratic imagination in attempting to justify the party policy in a way to satisfy free state Democrats.

The reflection of the great contest at Washington in the spring of 1854 is clearly found in the Oregon legislature of '54-'55. The Democratic leader, Delazon Smith, introduced a long series of resolutions endorsing Pierce and the acts of the National Administration and especially the Kansas-Nebraska bill. He boldly affirmed that its passage was a virtual repeal of that part of Oregon's organic law which declared that slavery should never exist in Oregon. The house discussed these resolutions day after day with warmth and vigor, finally passing them, but the council offered amendments which it refused to accept. Prominent in opposing the Democratic position was Dr. A. G. Henry, of Yamhill County, the leading Whig member of the legislature. He introduced counter resolutions attacking the Kansas-Nebraska bill and his speech supporting them was remarkable, both for its accurate and vivid historical presentation of slavery legislation in the United States and for clear and cogent reasoning therefrom.<sup>4</sup> The marked ability of even the average member of legislative assemblies in those days to discuss the great political problems before the

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<sup>1</sup>"The Statesman and Standard are feeling their way into a support of the Kansas-Nebraska bill. The editors and assistants expect, no doubt, to get situations as Negro drivers. New England apostates and former free soilers, make first-rate overseers, so far as whipping Negroes is concerned."—Oregonian, July 22, 1854.

<sup>2</sup>Statesman, August 15, 1854.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., August 22.

<sup>4</sup>Reproduced in the Oregonian, February 17, 1855.

country, is indeed striking and a continual source of surprise and admiration. Every man was a politician. The issues were vital and were studied until all were posted on them.<sup>1</sup>

The attempt of the leaders of the Democratic party in Oregon to create sentiment in favor of the Kansas-Nebraska doctrine was met with sturdy opposition. For example, the Yamhill County Whig convention held in April, 1855, did "utterly and unequivocally repudiate and condemn the Nebraska-Kansas bill as a wanton and unnecessary renewal of the slavery agitation." It denounced the principle of popular sovereignty and declared the right and duty of Congress to exercise the power of sovereignty in the Territories.<sup>2</sup> The Oregon Whigs belonged to the northern wing of the party and could be counted upon to resist pro-slavery aggression. Many, however, who felt most deeply upon the subject, did not consider the old and rapidly disintegrating party as the proper and adequate avenue of attack against slaveocracy. Accordingly, on June 27, 1855, an anti-slavery convention was held at Albany, the first to take place in Oregon Territory. Thirty-nine men were present and signed their names to the records of the historic meeting, thus becoming in a way the charter members of the organized movement against slavery aggression in the Far Northwest.<sup>3</sup> The intense feeling which had been aroused in the distant northern territory within one year after the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, is well suggested by the resolutions passed by these thirty-nine pioneers in the cause of freedom. They resolved that the whole system of legislation by Congress since and including 1850 was a flagrant outrage on the civilization of the age and disgraceful to the patriotism and religion of the whole country; that the artfulness and treachery displayed in the aggressiveness of the slave power "should awaken a most jealous watchfulness in regard to its movements in this direction, as we know not at

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<sup>1</sup>Conversation with Judge Williams.

<sup>2</sup>Oregonian, April 21, 1855.

<sup>3</sup>See Oregonian, July 7, for names of those attending. So far as is known, but one of the 39, W. C. Johnson, of Portland, is still living in 1910.



what moment, by some artful ruse, it may be precipitated upon our Territory." The holding of county meetings throughout the Territory was encouraged for the purpose of arousing public sentiment against the growing evil of slavery and for securing the election of men to office who could be relied upon to oppose its encroachments. The support of the anti-slavery newspapers in Oregon was urged.

Likewise, the intense feeling on the other side of the question is evidenced in the comment made on this convention. Delazon Smith, the "Lion of Linn," was an eye witness of the proceedings and reported with satisfaction to the Statesman that only one of the participators was ever suspected of being a Democrat.<sup>1</sup> He said the issue in 1854 was the Maine Law, in 1855 Know Nothingism, and now it was to be Free Soilism—and that the champions were the same in each case. He became sarcastic on the "artful ruse" expression, declaring that not one man in twenty, permanently residing in Oregon, wished to see it a slave state. The attitude of Bush was picturesquely characteristic. He refused to publish the proceedings of the meeting which he referred to as "a collection of old grannies." "It is decidedly icy in these nigger-struck dames to ask the Statesman to publish their stale fanaticism. . . . If anything could make the people of Oregon desire slavery, it would be the agitation of the subject by such fanatics as these."<sup>2</sup>

The first Oregon counterpart of the action of Eastern anti-Nebraska men in assuming the name of "Republican party," early in 1856, is found in Jackson County in May of the same year. It was a nominating convention of "the Republicans of Jackson county" and was held at Lindley's school house, in Eden precinct. H. Colver addressed the meeting, "showing the aims, object and principles of the Republican movement."<sup>3</sup> After an expression that old dividing issues had passed away or had now faded into insignificance before the one great question, the meeting adopted a ringing platform. It declared

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<sup>1</sup>Statesman, July 14, 1855.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>See Oregon Argus, June 7, for report of proceedings.

freedom to be national, slavery sectional; that the power of the Federal Government should be exerted to prohibit slavery in every territory of the United States. However, in the next sentence, it was affirmed that the people are the rightful source of all political power and that officers, as far as practicable, should be chosen by a direct vote of the people. This is suggestive of what a strong appeal one phase of the doctrine of popular sovereignty made to Oregonians generally. It is rather suggestive that the first Republican meeting in Oregon was held in the southern part of the Territory where Southern sentiment was most pronounced.

On the 20th of August, following, "a number of the friends of the Republican cause" met at Albany to inaugurate Republican organization in the Territory.<sup>1</sup> Practically all those whose names figure in the report of this meeting were among the thirty-nine members of the Free Soil convention of the previous year. The expediency of immediate organization was affirmed. The resolutions heartily approved of the principles set forth by the Philadelphia National convention, which had taken place in June, a month after the date of the Jackson County meeting. The nomination of Fremont and Dayton was hailed with enthusiasm. Steps toward immediate organization were taken. The holding of primary and county meetings was urged. A committee was appointed to correspond with the friends of the Republican cause throughout the Territory to consider the propriety of calling a Territorial convention. Before adjourning, the manifesto was made that "We fling our banner to the breeze, inscribed—'Free Speech, Free Labor, a Free Press, a Free State and Fremont.'"

Precinct and county Republican conventions followed in the fall of 1856. The Oregonian of December 6th announced that almost every county in Oregon had held a Republican convention and adopted a platform. These platforms, agreeing on the great question at issue, still differ sufficiently to render them interesting subjects for study. The Yamhill County con-

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<sup>1</sup>Argus, September 6, 1856; Oregonian, September 13.

vention of November 15th, gave the Democrats a significant reminder, in endorsing the wisdom of the act of Congress organizing the Territory, which, "by applying the principle incorporated by Thos. Jefferson in the Ordinance of 1787, prohibits slavery in our Territory." The Yamhill Republicans declared with more grandiloquence than precision that they were for free Territories and free States, for free farms and free labor, free society and free school, free thought and free discussion, free speech and free press, free religion and free votes—for freemen, Fremont and freedom. However, the politic Dr. McBride introduced a special resolution, which was adopted, expressing opposition to interference in any way with slavery in those states where it already existed. The Clackamas convention of November 29th prefaced its resolutions with the "whereas," that the old Whig party was dead, the Know Nothing party was dying and the falsely called Democratic party ought to be dead and buried. It disavowed any intention of the Republicans to interfere with slavery in the states, but declared the General Government bound from principle and policy to guarantee freedom to all the Territories. Figuring prominently in this incipient Republican organization in the Territory were not a few whose names were to be writ large in the future annals of the state.

The attitude of the three leading papers of the Territory toward the new Republican party is interesting and significant. That of the Statesman was exactly what might be expected. In an editorial, "A Black Republican Party in Oregon—the Face for Next Year,"<sup>1</sup> Bush shows the past opposition to Oregon Democracy to have been one and the same, whether fighting under the banner of Law and Order, No Party, People's Party, Whig, Temperance or Know Nothing; that the next front to be presented by this mongrel opposition was to be "Black Republican — Disunion, . . . the true face of these fanatics."

A life-long and violent Whig, Editor Dryer of the Oregonian, found himself in a rather embarrassing position during

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<sup>1</sup>Statesman, September 19, 1856.

the presidential campaign of 1856. For while Oregon had no voice in presidential elections the attitude of the Territorial editors during the campaigns was hardly less aggressive on that account. The wreck of the Whig party which met at Baltimore, September 17, 1856, ratified the Know Nothing nominations of Fillmore and Donelson, made at Philadelphia, February 22, but did not adopt the American party platform.<sup>1</sup> Early in the campaign Dryer entered the nominations of all the parties at the head of his editorial page, headed by the names of Fillmore and Donelson in big, black display type. Before the end of the campaign he changed the latter to the modest type in which the others appeared. Though opposing Buchanan in a general way he did not come out for either Fillmore or Fremont, though he published re-print articles favorable to both and occasionally unfavorable. His attitude was that of satisfaction with either, if only the defeat of Buchanan could be secured, who stood on the Cincinnati platform which endorsed the substitution of squatter sovereignty for the Missouri Compromise. But Dryer endorsed Buchanan's inaugural address as good old Whig doctrine and good enough for him if carried out.<sup>2</sup> Thus is seen the uncertain, purposeless attitude of Dryer who found himself a man without a party.

So steadfast was Dryer to his old Whig allegiance, that he viewed askance the organization of the new party in Oregon. In his view its principles were so sufficiently maintained by the Whigs as to preclude the necessity of a new organization. He resented freely the idea that Republicanism was a new doctrine and likewise resented the apparent efforts of the supporters of the new movement to declare and maintain a monopoly in Republican principles.<sup>3</sup> His attitude was frankly critical and semi-hostile.

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<sup>1</sup>Johnston's "American Politics," p. 176.

<sup>2</sup>Oregonian, April 11, 1857.

<sup>3</sup>"We have always supposed we were a Republican, we think so still. . . . If our republicanism don't suit you gentlemen, your republicanism won't suit us, and we shall not endorse it."—Oregonian, November 8, 1856.

On the other hand the *Argus* strongly supported the Republican organization. Its declaration was made November 1, 1856. In September a movement had been launched in Linn County for the raising of capital in the Territory for establishing a Republican paper.<sup>1</sup> But when Adams committed the *Argus* to the cause, the effort to start a new paper was given up and the *Argus* was recognized as the official Republican organ. Adams declared the cardinal doctrines of the Oregon Republican party to be those demanding a free Territory and a Pacific railroad.<sup>2</sup>

While the *Oregonian* did not ally itself with the Republican movement, by 1856 it took up the issue definitely against slavery. It had had as little sympathy with abolitionism as had the *Statesman*. In 1853 it contained frequent insinuations against Mrs. Stowe and "Uncle Tom's Cabin" and abolitionists in general. But it became aroused by the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska bill and by the series of events which followed in its train. When Delazon Smith's resolutions endorsing the bill were before the legislature of '54-'55, R. J. Ladd of Umpqua county moved to strike out the 5th resolution which stated that the physical conditions in Oregon were unpropitious for the introduction of slavery and would operate to keep it out of the Territory. He declared that he did not want to discourage slave holders coming to Oregon with their property if they saw fit. It was the voice of a minority. But so completely was the slave power getting control of the Democratic party of the United States and so subservient were the rank and file to party action and decrees, that it was not a wild and unreasonable fear on the part of those who saw in this minority the possibility of the encroachment of slavery in Oregon. It was this fear which gave zest to Republican organization. It was this fear that led the conservative Dryer to change his policy of "letting slavery alone."

The progress of the civil strife in Kansas, in which the Administration had actively interfered in behalf of the pro-

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<sup>1</sup>See *Argus*, October 4, 1856.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, November 1, 1856.

slavery party, was followed anxiously by Oregonians for whom it had peculiar significance. Sumner had been assaulted by Brooks in the United States Senate chamber on May 22, 1856. Moved by these various events, Dryer made his first determined assault on slavery in the *Oregonian* of July 12, 1856. In strongest terms he arraigned the system which had always been a source of discord and whose present "fearful recklessness" now threatened the actual dissolution of the Union.<sup>1</sup> He also attacked Lane for his action in the Sumner-Brooks affair in serving as Brooks' second when the latter challenged Senator Henry Wilson to a duel; also when Brooks challenged Anson Burlingame. Lane's personal sympathies were thus publicly declared, but the *Oregonian* objected especially to his thus compromising and crippling the Territory which he represented.<sup>2</sup>

It has been shown that in the elections of 1854, 1855 and 1856, the *Oregonian* strongly opposed statehood. In the last election its opposition had been very pronounced, indeed. In a leader, "Shall Oregon Become a State?" in the issue of November first of the same year, Dryer turned squarely about and began advocating state organization. He attributed his change of attitude to the policy of the Buchanan Administration in acting as "the handmaid for the extension of slavery over free territory." In his own words, "If we are to have the institution of slavery fastened upon us here, we desire the people resident in Oregon to do it and not the will and power of a few politicians in Washington City. If the power of the regular army is to be used to crush out freedom in the Territories . . . we had better throw off our vassalage and become a state at once."

This seemed to be the general sentiment of the people of Oregon. Whereas in the election of 1856 the question of statehood had been lost by 249 votes, in the very next year it

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<sup>1</sup>"We dislike modern abolitionism as much as we do slavery; and although we shall never go where slavery is already established for the purpose of opposing it, we shall contend against its introduction here or elsewhere, where freedom now exists."—*Oregonian*, November 1, 1856.

<sup>2</sup>*Oregonian*, September 20, 1856.



was to win by an overwhelming majority of 5938. The passage of the Kansas-Nebraska bill had opened up the foreign issue of slavery in distant Oregon and had set movements in operation which were to result in complete political realignment. Likewise, the aftermath of the Kansas-Nebraska bill—the strife over Kansas and the National Administration's interference therein—was reflected in the revolution of public sentiment in the isolated Territory on the subject of statehood. It was the general determination that Oregon must be made secure against the possibility of the distress of "Bleeding Kansas" and a state organization seemed to promise the only security.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE NATIONAL ISSUE IN OREGON IN 1857

The session of the legislature which met December 2, 1856, passed what had become a customary act, calling for a vote at the ensuing election on the question of holding a constitutional convention. Considering the narrow margin by which the measure had been defeated the preceding June, and in view of the fact that the Oregonian had changed front on the issue, the result of the coming election was almost a foregone conclusion; so nearly so that it was provided that at the same time at which the vote should be taken, delegates should be elected to the convention. As far as the people of Oregon could bring it about, statehood was imminent. In the erection of the framework of the new government vital issues were involved. How those issues were met and settled, the following pages will endeavor to show.

To the Republicans the one paramount issue was that of freedom or slavery for the new state. To meet this great issue successfully they were zealous in extending their party organization. On February 11, 1857, a convention was held at Albany, at which delegates were present from eight counties—Multnomah, Clackamas, Washington, Yamhill, Linn, Umpqua, Polk and Benton.<sup>1</sup> W. T. Matlock, of Clackamas, was chairman, and Leander Holmes, of the same county, secretary. Other prominent men in attendance were Stephen Coffin, J. R. McBride, W. L. Adams, E. L. Applegate, T. S. Kendall, S. M. Gilmore and W. B. Daniels. The platform of principles adopted declared strongly against the extension of slavery over "any Territory of the United States now free." It held that there was no real difference as to the "true interests of Oregon" dividing honest Whigs, Democrats, Republicans, and Americans, who had had the manly independence to resist the usurpation and abuse of power on the part of "the present ruling faction."<sup>2</sup> It bespoke the necessity of the Union of all

<sup>1</sup>Proceedings, in Oregonian, February 21, 1857.

<sup>2</sup>"The gentlemen who composed the convention seem to have imagined themselves the first advance guard who have ever had the courage to assault the citadel of the Salem dynasty, or who dare strike for freedom."—Oregonian, February 21.

"The Nigger-worshipping convention at Albany came off last week and was a slim affair."—Statesman, February 17.

free and independent citizens to secure the adoption of a "Free State Constitution" for Oregon. "We therefore . . . announce ourselves as the 'Free State Republican Party' of Oregon, and as such will fight the political battle of freedom." Another important plank in the platform was that declaring for the immediate construction of a central Pacific Railroad and for the improvement of rivers and harbors of a national character, by congressional appropriations. A Territorial Executive Committee was elected and more thorough county organization urged.

A committee composed of W. L. Adams, Thos. Pope and Stephen Coffin was selected to prepare an address to the people of Oregon. This address was prepared at length, with great care and was not published until two months after the convention.<sup>1</sup> It was a complete and most able presentation of the slavery question in American politics, since 1784, when a resolution denouncing the slave trade was passed in the Continental Congress. Facts were cited to show that the General Government in all its legislation for seventy years, showed a strong tendency to carry out the wishes of the founders of the government, who looked upon slavery as a great national calamity to be tolerated where it existed, but who shaped the Constitution and all their legislation so as to prepare the way for its gradual extinction. In all this salutary legislation, from the time of the passage of the Ordinance of 1787, onward, the opposition of South Carolina had been marked. The growth and extension of this opposition throughout the South was traced, resulting finally in the Kansas-Nebraska bill, "which has raised the present storm that now rocks the fabric of the Union to its center." The farce of popular sovereignty was shown in a vivid sketch of conditions in Kansas. The modern Democratic party was declared by its policy to have made slavery the paramount issue. The only security for the perpetuity of the Union now lay in "non-extension"—the cardinal principle of the Republican party. Clear-cut and well defined,

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<sup>1</sup>For text, see *Oregonian*, April 18, and *Argus*, April 11.

the dominant issue was presented squarely to the people of Oregon.

In conclusion, local affairs were treated and the Democratic administration in Oregon was attacked along the following lines: the "frittering away" of public funds and appropriations; keeping the state capital question inflamed; making the Indian war a party war; enactment of the Viva Voce law; tardiness in completing land surveys.

For a thorough understanding of the situation in Oregon at this time, it will be necessary here to give attention to what was taking place in the ranks of Democracy. As has been suggested, the yoke of Bush and the Salem Clique was galling to many Democrats. In the first place such abject obedience as was demanded was humiliating, and a reproach to men of strong individualism. In the second place, there was a protest against monopolizing the perquisites of Democratic Administration by a small, self-constituted ring.<sup>1</sup> The spirit of mutiny was rising. It was felt in the session of the legislature of '56-'57 and began to be manifested early in 1857. The Democratic Standard had come to be looked upon as an anti-machine paper. At a Democratic caucus held January 20 while the legislature was in session it was formally discarded from the party and denounced as an organ of the opposition. The vote declaring such action, however, was close—15 to 12.<sup>2</sup> The issue was thus joined. On the one side was the organization or machine, standing for unquestioning obedience to party rule and declaring for the binding authority of regular party conventions, or for "caucus sovereignty." On the other, were the independent Democrats who denied the absolute authority of party or caucus action. The former were called "the hards"; the latter, "the softs."

Bush at once took up the fight against the mutinous, beginning with an attack on the twelve who formed the minority in

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<sup>1</sup>As popularly conceived, the Salem Clique was composed of Asahel Bush, L. F. Grover, B. F. Harding, J. W. Nesmith and R. P. Boise.

<sup>2</sup>Statesman, January 27, 1857.

the above mentioned caucus.<sup>1</sup> Prominent among these were Nat. Ford of Polk, J. C. Avery of Benton, Andrew Shuck of Yamhill and J. K. Kelly of Clackamas, the latter being president of the Council. The Statesman's definition of an independent Democrat was "one who votes for the meanest kind of a Know Nothing, nigger-worshipping apostate from the Democratic party."<sup>2</sup> But the opposition was not to be dissipated this time by the mere applying to it a few ugly names. The revolt grew and preparations were made in different counties for nominating independent Democratic tickets as opposed to the regular.

Nearly all the regular Democratic precinct and county conventions held in the spring of 1857 followed the lead of the caucus of January 20, in denouncing the Standard and hurling defiance at all bolters. The disregard of party nominations was held to be unpardonable sin in politics.<sup>3</sup> The attitude of the "hards" toward the "softs" is summed up in the expression of Labish precinct, Marion county:<sup>4</sup> "Whereas, there are some persons who profess to belong to the Democratic party and talk about the true Democracy and stigmatize the Democratic party now in power as a 'clique'; Resolved—That we recognize none as Democrats who do not support with their votes the present Democratic organization, and further, that those who bolt or countenance bolting should not be recognized as belonging to the regular organization." Some counties, however, assumed a neutral, judicial attitude. The Multnomah convention attributed the division to controversies in which the Democratic press "have so wantonly indulged, and we repudiate such as anti-Democratic and unjust."<sup>5</sup>

Despite the gathering clouds, Bush stated April 7 that the party was never more vigorous and strong; that it had a constitution fully strong enough "to spew out the putrid matter

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., January 27, February 3 and February 24.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., March 31.

<sup>3</sup>Declaration of South Salem precinct. Statesman, April 7.

<sup>4</sup>Statesman, March 31.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., April 7.

which had collected on its stomach." The characteristic attitude of Bush toward opposition in the ranks was exactly stated by him in the Statesman editorial, April 14: "Divisions are not to be avoided by winking at error and temporizing with treason and traitors. If you would have a healthy body, cast off the rotten limbs. . . . A cancer can't be healed until the affected parts are removed. The knife must precede the plaster. Caustic before salve." Bush was no compromiser. With him it was war to the last.

Such was the general situation in the Oregon Democratic party, when the Democratic Territorial convention met at Salem on April 13. The "hards" were in complete control of the convention, which fact was strongly emphasized by the platform adopted.<sup>1</sup> The famous fifth and sixth resolutions gave full and adequate expression to the demand of the machine for party regularity and the exercise of party discipline. They demanded unwavering allegiance to the organization and its candidates and placed all who refused it under the ban of party excommunication.<sup>2</sup> The seventh resolution denounced the Standard and a special one was adopted, "that this convention recognize the Portland Times as Democratic and its editor as a worthy man." Thus easily was the enduement or deprivation of Democracy accomplished by enactment in the days of the Oregon Democratic Regime.

The position taken by the assembled Democrats upon the question of slavery and their attitude toward it, is not less suggestive and significant. They denied in general terms the right of the Federal Government to interfere with such domestic institutions of states or territories as were recognized by the Constitution, and deprecated attempts to exercise such a right

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<sup>1</sup>Proceedings—Statesman, April 21; Oregonian, April 25.

<sup>2</sup>Fifth Resolution: That we repudiate the doctrine that a representative or a delegate can, in pursuance of the wishes or fancied interests of the district he represents, go into or remain out of a caucus or convention of his party, and refuse to support the nominations thereof, and still maintain his standing as a Democrat.

Sixth Resolution: That the re-election of any representative or delegate, thus refusing to support Democratic nominations, would *not* "be an endorsement or approval of his conduct, beyond which the Democracy of other districts would have no right to enquire, but that it would be both the right and the duty of sound Democrats everywhere, to discard him as a disorganizer and an enemy."



as subversive of republicanism and productive of anarchy. This led directly to an expression on the situation in Oregon. Noting the fact that the people were called on to elect delegates to a constitutional convention and to pass upon the question of slavery in Oregon before the Democratic party should again assemble, they declared that in the choice of those delegates they would not discriminate between pro-slavery and free state Democrats; that the delegates should not predetermine that question in the formation of the constitution, but should submit the same in a separate clause to be voted upon directly by the people. Here was a practical recognition of the doctrine of popular sovereignty to which Oregon Democrats long pointed with pride.<sup>1</sup> It was all the more popular with them as a solution, in that it saved them the necessity of assuming an embarrassing if not fatal position upon the all-important question. The paramount issue with Oregon Democrats was Oregon Democracy and its perpetuity. Party declaration upon the disturbing issue of slavery, which would foment party dissension and invite party disruption and loss of power, must be avoided at all hazards. The one consuming desire of the regular or machine Democrats was to maintain the organization intact. From this standpoint it was therefore a very serious situation which confronted the Democracy. Hence the humor and significance of the eleventh and following resolution could hardly have appealed to the convention: "Resolved—That each member of the Democratic party in Oregon may freely speak and act according to his individual convictions of right and policy upon the question of slavery in Oregon, without in any manner impairing his standing in the Democratic party on that account—provided that nothing in these resolutions shall be construed in toleration of black republicanism, abolitionism or any other factor or organization arrayed in opposition to the

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<sup>1</sup>Resolution adopted by Linn County Democratic convention, March, 1858: With pride and exultation we point the citizens of the States and Territories to the course pursued by the people in Oregon in framing, canvassing and adopting their state constitution. . . . Because here, the principles embodied in the Kansas-Nebraska bill have had their first and only fair and legitimate test; and here, too, their wisdom, equity and practicability have been triumphantly vindicated.—In Statesman, March 16, 1858.

Democratic party." The artless, serious manner in which Oregon Democrats were thus formally granted the exceptional boon of holding individual convictions on a political issue, is in itself a striking and sufficient commentary on the absolutism of the Democratic Regime.

For the fourth time the Democrats nominated Lane for delegate. The Clique would have preferred another man, but his hold upon the people was still strong, and in the face of threatened rebellion in the ranks, the leaders feared to put up a less popular man.<sup>1</sup> The reception in certain counties of the convention's proceedings was ominous of coming schism in the Democratic party. For example, the National Democrats in Yamhill county withdrew from the regular county convention, which endorsed the Salem platform and reassembled in a convention of their own. They put out a separate ticket and refused to support Lane unless he should unconditionally repudiate the fifth, sixth and seventh resolutions of the late Territorial convention.<sup>2</sup> Similar action was taken in Clatsop, Multnomah, Clackamas and Benton counties and Democratic disaffection existed in some measure throughout the Territory. It found expression in the action of G. W. Lawson, an independent, free state Democrat, who announced his candidacy for delegate in opposition to Lane. The Republicans did not yet consider their organization strong enough to warrant their nominating a candidate.

The Democrats were largely successful in their efforts to avoid raising the slavery issue in the June election and there was no opposition sufficiently strong to force that issue. In a few counties "Free State Conventions" were held for "the single purpose of electing delegates to form a state constitution;"<sup>3</sup> but comparatively little was accomplished. The Oregonian realized that the opposition had little to gain and much to lose in draw-

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<sup>1</sup>Private letter—Nesmith to Deady, May 3, 1857, concerning the convention: "The 'institution' was decidedly *hard*. A great amount of enthusiasm was exhausted upon the platform but not a d—— bit upon the candidate. I accompanied the 'amiable' Doctor [Drew] and Bush to Portland and saw the 'true principles of the Government' [Lane] placed squarely upon the platform. He mounted it with the same alertness that he would any other hobby to be ridden in the direction of his own success."

<sup>2</sup>Proceedings, Oregonian, May 9.

<sup>3</sup>Lane County Convention, May 14.

ing party lines in the selection of delegates to the convention and deprecated such action.<sup>1</sup> The anxiety of the Democrats to avoid disaster on the slavery question is reflected in the proceedings of various of their county conventions held in the spring of 1857. Stoutly denying that theirs was a pro-slavery party, they revolted at the idea of making slavery a party issue and followed the lead of the Salem convention in demanding a separate vote of the people on the question, when the constitution should be submitted.<sup>2</sup> But while granting that members of the party should vote for a free state if they saw fit, the latter were urgently recommended to guard against "in any way countenancing that contention-loving, union-hating party called the Black Republican party."<sup>3</sup>

The campaign of 1857 was peculiar in the history of Oregon politics. The success of the state constitutional convention issue was practically assured and for the first time in years there was no struggle over this question. Slavery was beginning to cast its shadow over the Territory and presented the only real issue before the people. But the determined and effective efforts of the Democrats had succeeded largely in obscuring or at least waiving that issue. It was not a clear-cut party campaign. Both the candidates for delegate were Democrats, which was expressive of the discord and division in Democratic ranks. The opposition was inchoate and unorganized. In the absence of a candidate to support and issues to defend, Editor Dryer of *The Oregonian* took little interest in the contest, which certainly bespeaks the abnormal nature of the campaign. Adams of *The Argus*, however, entered the lists for Lawson against the Salem "caucus sovereignty" platform.<sup>4</sup> The rather chaotic nature of the situation may be indicated by noting the different kinds of county tickets which were supported. Washington county had the only avowed Know Nothing ticket in the field,<sup>5</sup> and it was successful over the Democratic. Mult-

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<sup>1</sup>*Oregonian* editorial on "State Constitution," April 4.

<sup>2</sup>"The Democratic party is not a pro-slavery party, but contends that slave holders have equal rights in the Territories with their Northern brethren and wishes to maintain them in peaceable enjoyment of those rights."—From Lane County convention proceedings in *Statesman*, April 14. ..

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup>"We hear of some who refuse to vote for either candidate. We think this is foolish—very. There are many good reasons why every freeman who has a soul ought to vote at this election."—*Argus*, May 23.

<sup>5</sup>*Supra*, page 68.

nomah had an "anti-Salem" or independent ticket which won generally over the Democrats.<sup>1</sup> Yamhill had two Democratic tickets and a partial Republican one. The latter was successful where it offered candidates. In other cases the "softs" or "National Democrats" won heavily over the "hards." Linn presented an independent, free state ticket, which proved no match for organized Democracy. Columbia added to the variety by putting out a Whig ticket, the "last of the Mohicans," which, however, manifested sufficient vitality to defeat the Democracy. Benton had two Democratic tickets—the "National" and the "Bush federal," the former being generally successful. The Clackamas opposition was denominated "Republican and Independent" but lost heavily. In Marion, Polk, Douglas and Wasco, the Democrats won easily over the opposition, variously denominated.

In the general results of the election, Lane defeated Lawson by a vote of 5662 to 3471. The vote for the constitutional convention was 7617, opposed by a vote of only 1679. In the legislature, the Democrats secured but a majority of one in the council, while the opposition placed ten members in the house. Fully one-third of the delegates-elect to the Constitutional Convention were anti-Democratic.<sup>2</sup> The opposition, though unorganized, had profited by the defection in the Democratic ranks.

The people of Oregon had now committed themselves unequivocally for state government. Their delegates had been chosen to the constitutional convention which was to meet in August. The question of Oregon free or Oregon slave, must soon be settled. The realization of this fact now began to stir the Territory, and whereas there had been little discussion of the slavery question before the June election, from that time on until the vote upon the Constitution in November, and even afterward, the question was prominently before the people. The *Argus* of August 1, said: "The Oregon papers that come to hand this week are pretty much filled up with the great ques-

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<sup>1</sup>Thus Dryer, who ran for joint-representative for Washington and Multnomah, was elected as a Know Nothing in one and an Independent in the other.

<sup>2</sup>Official returns in *Statesman*, July 7.

tion that now constitutes the politics of the Nation." Feeling became intense. At this distance it may seem almost inconceivable that there was any basis for such agitation; that there was any danger of Oregon's becoming a slave state. Whatever may be the mature conclusions on this point after the lapse of a half century, the fact remains that there was apparently very serious danger at the time. Indeed it has been recently stated by a careful writer who was a participant in Oregon politics in 1857, that the people of Oregon were then in far more danger of the introduction of slavery among them than the people of Kansas were at any time.<sup>1</sup> The state of blind subservience of the masses of Democracy to their leaders has been dwelt upon. This fact was ominous to free state advocates, for while few of the Democratic leaders had thus far come out aggressively for slavery, the sympathies of several of them were well known. Lane had shown himself a Southern sympathizer and a pro-slavery man, and his influence upon the rank and file, who felt, in a vague way, that "the king can do no wrong," was sinister. The Statesman had taken no definite position. But it had been free to abuse and berate free state agitators, and this was far from reassuring. Newspapers were started for the advocacy of slavery. The adaptability of the institution to Oregon was freely argued. The National Administration had committed itself to the slavery propaganda and its attitude toward federal office holders and politicians made them at least very charitable in their attitude toward the sacred institution of the South. And finally, the Dred Scott decision had rendered that institution national—had invested it with the sanction of the final and most sacred tribunal of the Nation.

These are some of the general considerations which, apparently at least, rendered slavery an actual menace to Oregon. To arrive at a closer understanding of the real situation during this period—of the situation as it actually appeared to the people then, not as it appears now in perspective—it will be necessary to notice the opinions, the impressions, the apprehensions of the

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<sup>1</sup>T. W. Davenport, in *Oregon Historical Quarterly* for September, 1908, p. 226.



people and upon what they were based. These are largely to be found and reflected in the newspaper press of the Territory.

From observations at Salem in his capacity as legislator during the session of '56-'57, Dryer avowed at the end of the session that the leaders, office holders and office-hunters had been busily preparing all winter, with ever-increasing boldness, to force slavery into Oregon; that several of the prominent leaders had openly declared that the Democratic party in Oregon was in favor of the introduction of slavery.<sup>1</sup> A little later he declared it to be an undeniable fact that nine-tenths of the Territorial office holders could be counted upon to exert their whole official influence in favor of slavery; that they were busily engaged in "whipping in" those who disagreed with them by branding them as Abolitionists and Black Republicans.<sup>2</sup> In an editorial—"Foreshadowing Events—Lane and Deady—" Dryer cited: Lane's actions in the Sumner-Brooks affair, and his recent importation from the East of a man named Hibben to edit the Portland Times as a pro-slavery organ; the public advocacy, by Judge Deady, one of the most prominent, gifted and popular Democrats in Oregon, of the introduction of slavery; the establishment of new journals in the Territory for the purpose of defending "that beneficent institution."<sup>3</sup> In August he told of the determined and aggressive canvass being made to win over to the cause of slavery the delegates to the Constitutional Convention. He declared that while during the campaign there was not a single newspaper that dared advocate slavery, there were now at least five of the eight in the Territory that directly or indirectly favored that institution.<sup>4</sup> But the more open and pronounced became the contest, the better it suited

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<sup>1</sup>Oregonian, February 7, 1857.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., March 21.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., June 20.

<sup>4</sup>The eight papers—Oregonian, Argus, Standard, Pacific Christian Advocate, Statesman, Times, Table Rock Sentinel and the Occidental Messenger. The last four were certainly included in the five referred to. The Standard, while Democratic, opposed slavery. Rev. Thos. H. Pearne, editor of the Pacific Christian Advocate, a Methodist organ, shut his eyes and said there was no slavery issue in Oregon.



the pugnacious Dryer, who defied the hosts of slavery in language expressive and picturesque.<sup>1</sup>

However, the *Argus*, as the Republican organ of the Territory, was looked upon as the true exponent of free state ideals. It contained more contributed articles on the subject at issue than any other paper, and Editor Adams wielded a pen as defiant and trenchant as that of Dryer. While the Constitutional convention was in session, in an editorial on "Aspects of Locofocoism," Adams gave a review of the political situation which was sufficiently suggestive and significant to warrant special attention.<sup>2</sup> He declared that among the Democrats in the Territory one pro-slavery man was equal to ten free state men. By which he meant that whereas the latter, afraid of the displeasure of their leaders and fearing the taunt of "Black Republican," were silent and passive, the pro-slavery men, by their aggressive activity, their political tact and sagacity, their "brazen, boisterous effrontery," more than made up for their disparity in numbers.

In support of this contention he offered several pertinent proofs or illustrations. First, that while the Democratic party probably had a free state strength of two to one, yet Jo Lane, a rabid, pro-slavery man, had been made the candidate for Congress over free state men of greater ability. Second, out of the five Democratic organs, three of them were doing their utmost to fasten slavery upon Oregon, while the other two evinced "such a craven and cowardly character" as to leave their real convictions in doubt.<sup>3</sup> Third, the "driven-nigger" majority meekly submitted and voted for Deady, the "nigger-driver's pet," for president of the Constitutional convention. Fourth, that while the Democratic party had reiterated it that each member was perfectly free to speak, write or vote pro or con on the subject without impairing his standing as a Demo-

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<sup>1</sup>"Come on, ye hirelings of slaveocracy, and 'd——d be he who first cries hold! Enough."—*Oregonian*, June 27.

<sup>2</sup>*Argus*, September 5.

<sup>3</sup>The five papers—*Statesman*, *Jacksonville Herald*, *Table Rock Sentinel* (Jacksonville), *Messenger*, *Times*. The last three were the rabid slavery advocates. The *Herald* was established August 1, 1857. Adams did not include the *Standard*, as it had been formally read out of the party.

crat, Judge Williams had lost caste and influence with his party for no other crime than that of having published an article in the Salem organ in favor of a free state.<sup>1</sup> And that while the Judge had been virtually ostracized for writing one letter against the introduction of slavery in Oregon, neither of the editors who were zealous in sowing pro-slaveryism broadcast over the Territory, nor Deady who had made stump speeches for slavery during the last canvass, had failed to raise themselves in the estimation of the "nigger-driving wing, while not a single driven-nigger, so far as we are aware, has had the audacity to whimper a syllable of doubt as to their orthodoxy as Democrats."

The viewpoints of the Oregonian and the Argus, the two radical anti-slavery organs, have been given. Their statements are not presented as conclusive evidence. They were probably colored by partisan prejudice. But Dryer and Adams presented the situation as they saw it and it was generally so accepted by their readers. The correctness of the presentation of the conditions made by the Oregonian and Argus and of the conclusions drawn, can be determined to a great degree by the evidence presented by the opposition press.

The Statesman was looked upon as a neutral in the contest. Bush declared that the sole question at issue was—"Will it pay?" the moral question scarcely entering into the problem at all.<sup>2</sup> But in warning the "Northern Kansas fanatics and maniacs" of the results of their agitation, he presented a succinct view of the situation, which, to say the least, strongly corroborates those views given by Dryer and Adams. "Although it cannot now be safely said whether Oregon will be a free or slave state," he wrote in March, he declared that should some New England Emigrant Aid Society attempt to abolitionize Oregon, the latter would certainly enter the Union as a slave state. "Such is the temper of the Oregonians; they want no outside interference." The sweeping and startling

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<sup>1</sup> *Infra*, page 149.

<sup>2</sup> "Did our climate, productions and market unquestionably favor slave labor, Oregon would knock for admission into the Union as a slave state."—*Statesman*, March 31, 1857.

admission was made that "Every man here realizes and acknowledges that the number of voters in favor of introducing slavery into Oregon is at least 100 per cent greater than it was one year or eighteen months ago; we believe it is 300 per cent greater."

After the June election, Bush threw open the columns of the *Statesman* for signed contributed articles on the slavery question. Judge Williams' famous free state letter appeared July 28, which will be noticed later. A few letters followed, pro and con. But as a rule free state contributors, other than Democrats, looked to the *Argus* as their medium, and of the free state Democrats, very few, indeed, had anything to contribute. On the other hand the pro-slavery agitators were inclined to turn to the pronounced pro-slavery organs. One of the contributors was F. B. Martin, of Yamhill County, who argued that cheaper labor was needed to develop the agricultural resources of the country, and that Oregon's salubrious climate would be beneficial to Negro slaves.<sup>1</sup> J. W. Mack, of Lane county, argued against the contention that nature had decreed against slavery in Oregon.<sup>2</sup> John Whiteaker, destined to become the first state governor, avowed strong pro-slavery sentiments and announced that making Oregon a free state would abolitionize the country and be a decided step in the direction of "equality of the races."<sup>3</sup>

The Jacksonville *Sentinel* stated the issue unreservedly, and bluntly committed the Oregon Democracy to the Southern cause: "There is no longer any doubt but the issue will hereafter be narrowed down to slavery and anti-slavery. The Black Republicans will rally under the banner of Free State and Free Soil in Oregon and the pro-slavery party under the Constitution and the measures to perpetuate the Union."<sup>4</sup>

But the ne plus ultra of the slavery propaganda in Oregon was found in the *Occidental Messenger*. It was established

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<sup>1</sup>*Statesman*, August 4.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, August 18.

<sup>3</sup>Reprint in *Statesman*, October 27, from *Occidental Messenger*.

<sup>4</sup>Quoted in the *Argus*, July 25. The editor of the *Sentinel* was W. G. T'Vault, the first editor of the *Spectator*, issued at Oregon City, February 5, 1846.

at Corvallis in the summer of 1857, through the instrumentality, it was thought, of J. C. Avery, a prominent Democratic politician. More radical, vehement and defiant advocacy of the slavery dogma could hardly have been expected in South Carolina, than was given by this paper away out on the extreme Northwestern frontier, over two thousand miles from the home of the "divinely appointed institution." In the very first issues, in calling attention to the subject of domestic slavery, "now agitating the public mind of Oregon from one extent of the Territory to the other," the imported editor, L. P. Hall, declared that he not only believed it to be right in principle, but that the prosperity of the country depended upon its adoption. "We desire to awaken the people of Oregon fully to the importance of this subject. African slavery is the conservative feature in our system of government . . . and must be broadly maintained or the historian may now be alive who will record the dissolution" of the Union. Again, "The slavery representation in the United States Senate needs strengthening . . . and a fine opportunity is now presented to restore the equilibrium by the admission of Oregon with a slavery clause."<sup>1</sup> But more significant and ominous yet was the declaration made by the Messenger at the time of the vote upon the Constitution in November: "Whether our principles triumph in the present election or not, so strong is our faith in the omnipotence of Truth, that we shall throw out upon our banner, to the pro-slavery men of Oregon, in whom we place our chief reliance, the consecrated words of Paul Jones—'We have not yet begun to fight.'"<sup>2</sup> In other words, the wishes of the people of Oregon as expressed at the polls were not to be recognized as final. Here was a frank portrayal of the characteristic attitude of the slave power in politics. It was a covert threat that the doctrine of popular sovereignty, the shibboleth of Democracy, would be prostituted in Oregon as ruthlessly as it had in Kansas, should the expression of that sovereignty be inimical to the interests of slavery.

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<sup>1</sup>Quoted in *Oregonian*, July 4.

<sup>2</sup>Quoted in *Statesman*, November 17.

Enough has been said to show conclusively that there was a degree of danger that the people of Oregon might decide in favor of a slave state. Bush had said that the only question was—"Will it pay?" And at the same time he added that in his belief, pro-slavery sentiment had increased three hundred per cent within a year or a year and a half. Evidently the opinion was growing that it *would* pay. Leading and influential Democrats were declaring that slavery was adaptable to Oregon and was desirable. The Democratic masses were in the habit of believing what their leaders told them. The Democratic press, where not openly and radically pro-slavery, was ominously non-committal, and it must be remembered that as a rule the rank and file of Democracy read their own papers as the law and the gospel and read none other. They did not see the Oregonian and the Argus. They spurned the Black Republican, free state agitators as "unclean," politically. They were not concerned with the moral aspect of the situation. Under all these circumstances it is not so strange after all, that the public sentiment of Oregon was undergoing a subtle change; that this change was felt and recognized by many close and anxious observers in the summer of 1857; and that grave apprehensions of the result were entertained.

One of these apprehensive observers was George H. Williams, chief justice of Oregon Territory by appointment of President Pierce and whose Democracy had never been questioned. On July 28th, the whole first page of the Statesman was occupied with a contributed article over his signature which is known in Oregon history as "Judge Williams' Free State Letter." A man of prominence and influence in his party, he entertained hopes of political advancement not unnatural in a man of his ambition and ability. He was warned by friends as to the results of the publication of his letter and he himself clearly understood that "in those days to be a sound Democrat, if it was not necessary to advocate slavery, it *was* necessary to keep still upon the subject."<sup>1</sup> But from the time when he became a voter he had been opposed to the extension of slavery into the new states.<sup>2</sup> While many other Oregon

<sup>1</sup>Private letter: Williams to Geo. H. Himes, August 26, 1907. This letter was written "fifty years after," on request of Mr. Himes, as a personal review of the considerations which called forth the Free State Letter.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.



Democrats of more or less prominence, doubtless felt as he did upon the subject, he was the only Democrat of standing in the Territory<sup>1</sup> who jeopardized political ambitions by entering the contest on the side of "nigger-worshippers, Union-hating abolitionists and dis-union black Republicans." But Judge Williams differed from the latter in that he ignored the moral issue altogether, attacking the question entirely from its practical, financial aspect. It was from arguments presented from this viewpoint that slavery sentiment was growing and the Judge recognized that nothing but a complete refutation of these arguments would be effective in turning the tide.<sup>2</sup> "What was needed at this juncture was just what happened—an earnest, thoughtful communication from one who could not be accused of having any designs on the unity and harmony of the Democratic party."<sup>3</sup>

To review very briefly the Free State Letter—the writer, in a concise, historical introduction showed that before the slave question was dragged into the political arena, the judgment of all parts of the country was against the advantages of slavery; that even in those districts whose climate and agricultural resources specially favored the institution, its ultimate benefits were doubtful. How much less expedient then would be its introduction in Oregon, whose conditions could easily be shown to be anything but favorable to a system of slave labor. In the first place, there is no ambition, no enterprise, no energy in such labor. One white man is worth more than two Negro slaves—slave labor is "demonstrably the dearest of any."<sup>4</sup> Second, Negro slaves other than house servants would be perfect leeches upon the farmers during the long, rainy winters.

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<sup>1</sup>Address before the Legislative Assembly of Oregon, delivered February 14, 1899. Quoted in Oregon Historical Quarterly for September, 1908, p. 232.

<sup>2</sup>Personal conversation with Judge Williams, July 28, 1909, in effect as follows: The letter has been criticized as written on too low a plane. I knew what I was doing. It was the only argument I could make to the people I wanted to influence. I had my own views as to the morals of the question, having always been an opponent of slavery, but generally speaking the morals of slavery were not called in question by the people. To have hinted that side of the question would have roused opposition to me as a "d——d abolitionist" and Black Republican and my letter would have gone for naught.

<sup>3</sup>Davenport, in Oregon Historical Quarterly for September, 1908, p. 236.

<sup>4</sup>John Randolph.



Third, the risk and expense in transporting slaves to distant Oregon, and the ease of escape in the sparsely settled, wooded and mountainous country, would render investment in slave property altogether too hazardous. Fourth, the escaped Negroes would find refuge and consort with Oregon's Indian enemies and become an added menace to the people. Fifth, slavery can no more stand as a paying institution with one-half of public sentiment arrayed against it than a house can stand with one corner stone. Sixth, introduce slavery, and free white labor will become degraded, if not impossible to secure altogether. To mix slave labor and free labor aggravates the evils of each and subtracts from the benefits of each. Finally, can Oregon afford to throw away the friendship of the North—the overruling power of the nation—for the sake of slavery? These and other points were supported by such close, logical reasoning, and backed up by an array of facts and figures which made them irrefutable and convincing.

The effects of the letter were soon evident. First, in the changed attitude manifested toward Judge Williams by his party.<sup>1</sup> In his own words, his hopes for the United States senatorship,<sup>2</sup> "vanished like the pictures of a morning dream. I was unsound on the slavery question."<sup>3</sup> But the influence of the letter upon public opinion was soon manifest throughout the Territory. Through the medium of the Statesman, it reached practically all the Democratic voters. It came bringing words of warning, of calm reasoning and of practical advice—and from a well-known fellow Democrat whose word was that of authority. His presentation of the situation was convincing. As pro-slavery sentiment had up to this time been steadily rising, from the publication of the Free State Letter on to the election in November, it seemed steadily to recede.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Letter: Williams to Himes—"The pro-slavery men claimed that though I pretended to be a Democrat, I was an abolitionist in disguise, and to be called an abolitionist then, especially in Oregon, was to be classed among outlaws and enemies to the peace of the country."

<sup>2</sup>Personal conversation: Had it not been for that letter I would have been one of Oregon's first senators.

<sup>3</sup>Address before the legislature, 1907.

<sup>4</sup>Davenport, "The Slavery Question in Oregon," in Oregon Historical Quarterly for September, 1908, pp. 234, 235. "After the circulation of this address, any observing person could notice that a change was taking place; any sensitive person could feel it."

The Constitutional convention assembled at Salem on August 17th. It was a matter of no little political significance, as Adams pointed out in the *Argus*, that Judge Deady, "the only man in the convention who took bold ground for slavery while canvassing for his seat,"<sup>1</sup> should be elected president of Oregon's constituent assembly. The Democrats organized the convention, just as they would a session of the legislature. Dryer was a member and in editorial correspondence to the *Oregonian* related that the "soft" and free state Democrats who had opposed the machine organization in the late election, now did penance and joined the Clique forces in caucus. He called attention to the fact that no delegate opposed to the Salem Clique had been placed at the head of a committee and declared that every committee had a pro-slavery majority.

Early in the convention Jesse Applegate presented resolutions to the effect that as a large proportion of the delegates had been chosen with the understanding that the question of slavery would not be decided by the convention but by the people directly, all debate on the subject should be considered out of order. The presentation of these resolutions was followed by an extended flow of oratory. Some acquiesced, while others objected strenuously to having the liberties of free speech thus arbitrarily abridged. Alignment on the issue was not partisan, but for the most part the resolutions, which failed to pass, were opposed by the free state men. Other resolutions were introduced against the admission of free Negroes. On September 11, J. R. McBride, of Yamhill, the only member of the convention elected under the name of Republican, in fulfillment of pre-election pledges to his constituents,<sup>2</sup> introduced the anti-slavery provision of the Ordinance of 1787. It was defeated by a vote of 41 to 9. McBride was chagrined to find some of his trusted free state associates

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<sup>1</sup>*Oregonian*, August 22.

Observations on the convention are based chiefly on the stenographic reports of P. J. Malone, found in the *Oregonian* in issues from August 22 to October 10, inclusive.

<sup>2</sup>John R. McBride, address: "The Oregon Constitutional Convention," delivered before the annual meeting of the Oregon Historical Society, December 20, 1902. Proceedings for the years 1902-1905, p. 33.

voting against him, on the plea that his measure was "too radical."<sup>1</sup> The convention determined to present the question of slavery and that of the admission of free Negroes as separate issues to be decided by the people, at the time of the submission of the Constitution. With the solution of the vexed question thus diplomatically arranged, the members proceeded with the further business of the convention, with which it is not the purpose to deal here.

The final vote on the completed Constitution was 34 to 11; absent or not voting, 15. The vote was almost wholly along party lines, the affirmative showing the strength of the Democratic ruling faction. With the affirmative voted most of the Anti-Salem Democrats, or those who were elected as such but who had been acting with the Clique. The "Opposition," including some "soft" Democrats, were found among the negative and "absent or not voting."

After the close of the Convention, Dryer voiced the objections of the Opposition to the Constitution. He maintained that future legislative assemblies had been "tied up" by the Convention's assuming to establish fundamental law; that there was too much of politics in the frame of government adopted—that it was drawn up with the main purpose of advancing the fortunes of the Oregon Democracy.<sup>2</sup> In the campaign which followed, the Oregonian, Argus, Standard—free state papers, and the Messenger, the rabid pro-slavery organ, opposed the adoption of the Constitution. Editor Adams branded it as "a huge viper, with poisonous fangs in its head, a legion of legs in its belly and a deadly sting in its tail."<sup>3</sup>

From the adjournment of the Convention September 18 to the election on November 9, the agitation over the slavery issue was intense. It was even reflected in the advertising

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Oregonian, September. 26.

<sup>3</sup>"We shall vote against the Constitution for many good reasons. . . . It is now coiled up, labeled from head to tail with Democracy, trying to charm the people to take it into their bosom, when it will instill its poison into the body politic and render it as completely paralyzed as under the odious principle of caucus sovereignty."—Argus, October 10.

columns of the press. In August, P. J. Malone, correspondent for the *Sacramento Union*, wrote that paper from Salem that the men who desired slavery in Oregon were limited to the comparatively few who had owned one or two negroes in some slave state; and who had early secured a section of land in Oregon under the donation land law; that they were generally too lazy to cultivate their own lands and thought it very desirable to have slaves to raise wheat that they might compete successfully with California farmers in California markets. On the other hand, those who had come later to Oregon, and had secured only 160 or 320 acres did not as a rule desire slavery. "And they are the more numerous class, as the ballot box will show."<sup>1</sup>

On November 9, the Constitution was adopted by the people of Oregon by a vote of 7195 to 3215. Free negroes were refused admission into Oregon by the overwhelming vote of 8640 to 1081.<sup>2</sup> One-fourth of the people desired slavery while about one-tenth only were willing to receive the negro free. The vote on slavery in a few of the southern counties was close, but was almost unanimous against the negro unenslaved.<sup>3</sup>

The summing up of the situation by Bush immediately after the election, is important as presenting the regular Democratic viewpoint.<sup>4</sup> He felicitated the party on having taken the "high and distinct ground of the Kansas principle on the subject of slavery," and "without any of those abuses or obstructions which have been most unfairly cast in the way of state organizations otherwheres, by designing and characterless politicians." He held that to bring to a successful conclusion the great, model scheme initiated by Douglas for adjusting the vexed question, it now remained only for Congress, a majority of the members of which had been elected on the basis of that scheme, to receive Oregon into the Union with or without slavery, as its Constitution should prescribe. This done and

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<sup>1</sup>Quoted in *Argus*, September 12.

<sup>2</sup>Official returns in *Statesman*, December 22.

<sup>3</sup>See appendix for the vote in detail.

<sup>4</sup>*Statesman*, editorial: "Democracy and the Slave Question," November 17.

the nation could point to a bright and living example of Democratic policy, wrought out to a perfect demonstration in Oregon, as contrasted with conditions in Kansas, which had suffered from foreign Black Republican interference. He declared that Oregon Democrats, in their future policy would regard the question as settled and would recognize no difference in individual membership and influence between those who in the late election had voted for, and who had voted against slavery. "The watchword shall be harmony."

In another editorial in the same issue, Bush admonished eastern papers not to misinterpret the vote against slavery. He assured them that the majority of the Oregon electors were Southern born and bred, while a large majority of the Northern men were sound, Constitutional men, who would be characterized by the Black Republican press as "pro-slaveryites." "Let not Black Republicanism lay the flattering unction to its soul that we are free soilish here. We are as far from that as California or Virginia."

The Messenger refused to accept the result as final. Maintaining the doctrine of equal rights between the States, and that the Territories were common property, it contended that the people of a Territory, in the formation of a state government, had no power to exclude slave-holders, as the exercise of such a right would invalidate the common partnership. "As great an evil as disunion would be, we consider there is still a greater, and that is, submission to the unrestricted will of a reckless fanaticism which overrides the barriers erected by the Constitution for the protection of the minority, and tramples with ruthless iron heel, upon the plainest principles of justice and equality." Thus early was the standard of secession raised in Oregon. Before the election, C. E. Pickett, a zealous slavery apostle, self-imported from California, had written a letter to the Messenger advocating the call of a convention of pro-slavery men during the coming winter, whether the Constitution was adopted or not.<sup>1</sup> He expressed the belief

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<sup>1</sup>Republished in Statesman, November 10.



that a line of policy could be agreed upon that would ensure them the balance of power in Oregon.

The regular session of the Territorial legislature met December 17. The organization or "hard" Democrats secured control of the assembly, officers being chosen on the issue of their allegiance to the fifth, sixth and seventh resolutions which had been adopted by the Democratic Territorial Convention in the spring. The assembly considered that it was meeting in an interregnum between a territorial and a state form of government, with the result that little was accomplished at this session. However, some discussions took place which are very significant, from a political point of view.

Wm. Allen, a "soft" Democrat from Yamhill county, offered the following preamble and resolution: "Whereas, it has been decided by the Supreme Court of the United States that Congress has no power to prohibit the introduction of slavery into the Territories; and, whereas, slavery is tolerated by the Constitution of the United States, therefore, Resolved—that the chair appoint a committee of three to report what legislation is necessary to protect the rights of persons holding slaves in this Territory."<sup>1</sup>

After following the heated Oregon newspaper controversies which followed so closely the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska bill and the troubles in Kansas, it is a matter of no little surprise to note the scant and tardy attention given the rendering of the Dred Scott decision. Apparently, it was looked upon by both the Democratic and the Opposition press as a two-edged sword, each being willing to allow the other to make the first attempt at wielding the dangerous weapon. The Oregonian ignored it. The Argus of August 29 reproduced Lincoln's Springfield, Illinois, speech of June 20, in answer to Douglas on the decision, but made no editorial comment until September 5. There was published in the Pacific Christian Advocate, in the absence of the editor, T. H. Pearne, a clipping from an exchange, headed "Judge Taney in 1819." In the article the

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<sup>1</sup>Proceedings in Oregonian, December 26.



words "infamous decision" occurred in allusion to the Scott case. The following week Pearne, whose sole purpose seemed to be to maintain his seat on the fence as regards the great issue of the day, apologized for the appearance of the article, emphasizing the fact that it was an extract and not the expression of a personal opinion. This roused Adams to reply: "We do not believe there is a Christian in the world who could say less of a decision (we view it as an opinion) that reduces a part of those for whom Christ died to the level of brutes, destroys state and territorial sovereignty and renders man-stealing national—a crime which by the Jewish law is punishable with death." As far as noted, this was about the extent of notice given the Dred Scott decision in the leading press of the Territory up to the meeting of the legislature.

To return to the latter, the Allen resolution was indefinitely postponed by a vote of 17 to 9. The debate, however, took up a large part of the day on which the resolution was introduced. In support of the latter Allen made the statement—"There are some slaves here"—but no law to protect this kind of property. He argued—"If our Constitution is rejected by Congress, we shall remain a long time as we are, under our Territorial government, and by passing laws protecting property in slaves, we shall encourage immigration."

The statement has been made<sup>1</sup> that there was not one negro slave within the far-reaching boundaries of the Territory after Judge Williams' decision in the Ford case in 1853.<sup>2</sup> And such is the general understanding. From a purely legal standpoint this is true, as slavery was not recognized under the organic law of the Territory. It was at least true up to the time of the Dred Scott decision—after that, it was a debatable question. But in the course of the debate on the Allen resolution, at least three men made the statement, apparently as a matter of course and without thought of contradiction, that there were negro slaves in Oregon. J. W. Mack said—"My neighbor in Lane county owns slaves and is now in California endeavoring

<sup>1</sup>T. W. Davenport, in *Oregon Historical Quarterly* for September, 1908, p 196.

<sup>2</sup>*Supra*, page 125.

to test the validity of the fugitive slave law.”<sup>1</sup> Dryer, as far as reported, offered the only contradiction to the statement that slavery existed in Oregon and that was apparently made from the legal standpoint—that slavery did not and could not exist because the organic act prohibited it.<sup>2</sup> In reply to him Allen said: “It has been proved upon this floor that slavery does exist in the Territory in several counties. There are some in Benton, Lane, Polk, Yamhill and I know not how many other counties. That matter was fairly proved on this floor on a former occasion and I do not deem it necessary to bring any further proof than the veracity of honorable gentlemen who are representative of their constituents here.”<sup>3</sup>

In its report of the legislative proceedings the Statesman naturally did not devote as much space to this debate as did the Oregonian. The Allen resolution, involving the interpretation of the Dred Scott decision, was the entering wedge by which Oregon Democracy was to be split asunder, and its significance was pretty fully recognized at the time.<sup>4</sup> Indeed Allen, a “soft” Democrat, was promptly accused by the “hards” of having introduced his resolution merely to create discord in the ranks of Democracy, as he knew there was a difference of opinion among the machine or “hard” Democrats upon the subject.

The attitude of the pro-slavery men was well shown in remarks of Mack, of Lane, a “hard.” He expressed surprise at the courage of the member from Yamhill in offering such a resolution at that period of Oregon affairs,<sup>5</sup> but announced that he would vote for it. “We have, under the Constitution as much right to hold our property—slaves—and have them protected as we have to hold our cattle and have them protected.” He admitted, with an injured air, that he did not expect the

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<sup>1</sup>Proceedings in Statesman, December 22.

<sup>2</sup>Proceedings, Oregonian, January 30.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Dryer, in editorial correspondence to the Oregonian, January 23, 1858: “The Negro bill has kicked up quite a stir among the harmonious Democracy. The pro-slavery wing accuse the free state Democrats of having joined the Black Republicans.”

<sup>5</sup>The resolution was introduced in December, following the decisive popular vote against slavery in November.

resolution to pass as "we are used to having injustice done us," but avowed his determination to remain loyal to the Democratic party, "unless that shall become abolitionized." W. M. Hughes, a "hard" from Jackson county, took the same ground.

On the other hand, note the position of N. H. Cranor of Linn county, likewise a "hard." He held that the decision of the Supreme Court did not apply to Oregon as Congress in its act organizing the Territory had expressly prohibited slavery; that Congress had granted Oregon the privileges of the north-western states in this matter and it had been their undoubted privilege to decide for or against slavery. He declared that immigrants to Oregon came with the full knowledge that slavery was prohibited and did not expect to hold such property in the Territory. Respects were then paid to Allen and other "soft" Democrats: "Men who have advocated Black Republican doctrine and supported Black Republican candidates, and were elected as avowed enemies to the decision of the Supreme Court certainly betray a strange inconsistency in advocating such doctrine as they do here. It comes with very poor grace from Black Republicans to charge Democrats with being Black Republicans—Democrats, too, who endorse the whole of the Dred Scott Decision."<sup>1</sup>

There was apparent basis for the charge that the opposition Democrats were acting with the intention of sowing dissension in the ranks of the regulars, and of thus breaking the power of Bush and the Salem wing of the party. The discussions and the vote<sup>2</sup> on the Allen resolution show how successful they were in their attempts. We find Mack and Cranor, both "hard" or machine Democrats, making opposite interpretations of the Dred Scott decision. Cranor, representing the free state or Douglas Democrats, still held to the principle of squatter sovereignty; while Mack, representing the Southern or pro-slavery Democrats, had gone beyond that doctrine in demanding the rights for slavery in the Territories which he claimed

<sup>1</sup>Cranor's epithet of "Black Republican" refers to the opposition in general as no members of this session were elected under the name "Republican."

<sup>2</sup>In the vote on indefinite postponement, 13 "hards" and 4 opposition voted in the affirmative and 5 "hards" and 4 opposition in the negative.

were recognized by the Supreme Court. Thus, despite the efforts of the leaders to keep the issue down, the coming break in the Oregon Democracy on the slavery question was forecasted in this debate.

In view of his dominant position in Oregon politics, the stand taken by Bush on the Dred Scott decision is important. In a long editorial—"The Power of a State over Slave Property"—appearing in the *Statesman*, December 8, he defended the doctrine of popular sovereignty. Opinions handed down in the decision were quoted to the effect that each state had the power to decide the question for itself. Whereupon Bush adds: "Nor is there any difference in this particular, between the power of the people moving in the formation of a state government, and the power of those already organized as a state. . . . It is the very gist of the Kansas-Nebraska principle that the *people* are called upon when they form a state government, to act upon the subject of slavery." He then proceeded to attack, on one hand, the abolitionists, who were determined to interfere with the rights of those owning slaves; who contended that the Constitution did not recognize slavery and therefore it could not lawfully exist within the Union. But, more important, on the other hand Bush said: "There is another class who declare that the Constitution does recognize property in slaves and that whatever is recognized by the Constitution is constitutional and national. Therefore slavery is constitutional and national." To refute this, the Scott decision is quoted to show that the Constitution recognizes and protects as property within the states *whatever the state laws determine to be property*.

Thus Bush interpreted the Dred Scott decision to harmonize with the doctrine of popular sovereignty. But it is noticeable that his discussion was limited to the immediate conditions in Oregon—i.e., to the situation presented in approaching statehood. As to the place, under the Dred Scott decision, of his favorite doctrine of popular sovereignty in the Territories themselves, he said nothing.

In the spring of the year 1857, the Democratic party announced its policy of ignoring the question of slavery as a political issue. In line with that policy it declared for the settlement of the question in Oregon in accordance with the doctrine of popular sovereignty. In the pursuance of such a course, the people of Oregon, after a period of turmoil, declared decisively against slavery. In the very month following that decision of the people, by which the Oregon Democracy had apparently so successfully evaded a dangerous issue, the Democrats were confronted with the dilemma presented by the Dred Scott Decision. Some, maintaining their allegiance to the principle of popular sovereignty, seized one horn of the dilemma, while others, more zealous in the cause of the slavery propaganda than in the maintenance of party consistency, seized the other. At the close of the year 1857 this readjustment had begun. The line of separation was not yet clearly marked, but it was indicated.

## THE FIRST-BORN ON THE OREGON TRAIL

By J. Neilson Barry

A nameless child of an Indian mother, born in the wilderness amid ice and snow, and a week later laid in an unmarked grave, is a short life history which would seem to have but little interest for those living one hundred years later. The child, however, was the first native of Eastern Oregon to have the blood of the white race in its veins, whose brief but entire lifetime was spent with those early explorers who crossed the continent to Astoria a century ago.

Pierre Dorion, son of the Canadian interpreter, who had accompanied the Lewis and Clark expedition, joined the overland party under Wilson Price Hunt on condition that his wife and two children might be allowed to accompany him, and the identification of the birthplace of his third child who was born on Monday, December 30th, 1811, will do much to determine the route taken by those early explorers who helped to open the way for the settlement and development of the great North-West.

The general idea seems to have been that the route of the Hunt expedition, at the time of this episode, lay through what is known as the Wallowa country in north-eastern Oregon, and is so marked on the map of early explorations issued by the Government. The birthplace of the Dorion baby, however, as well as other places along this portion of the route, would seem to be determined by the identification of a locality to which Irving refers three times in his account of the Astoria party, and which the character of the country shows to be in the vicinity of Huntington, Oregon, where the Snake River leaves the great Idaho plains and enters into that great canyon through which even to this day there is no passage.

Irving's description of the travels of Hunt's party shows that they were in the open country through the greater part of November, 1811, following along the banks of the Snake River which the Canadians called "the accursed mad river." During



the three days, November 24, 25 and 26, "they made about seventy miles; fording two small streams, the waters of which were very cold" (Chapter XXXIV) "on the 27th of November the river led them into the mountains" beyond which point traveling was exceedingly arduous, and after many days of suffering and privation in an endeavor to follow the river through that rocky canyon, they were forced to turn back, and to retrace their steps to the open country above the point where the river entered the mountains. On this return journey, about December 15th they found their road "becoming easier, they were getting out of the hills, and finally emerged into the open country, after twenty days of fatigue, famine and hardship of every kind, in the ineffectual attempt to find a passage down the river. They now encamped on a little willowed stream, running from the East, which they had crossed on the 26th of November." Leaving Mr. Crooks they were led from here by an Indian guide, along an apparently well known trail, to the Grande Ronde Valley and across the Blue Mountains to the Umatilla country.

This vicinity where the river leaves the plain and enters the mountains was visited for the third time the following summer by Mr. Stuart and his party on their return to the States. They returned along the same "route which had proved so disastrous to Mr. Hunt's party during the preceding winter" (Chapter XLIV). On the 10th of August they reached "the main body of Woodville Creek, the same stream which Mr. Hunt had ascended in the preceding year, shortly after his separation from Mr. Crooks. . . . On the 12th of August, the travelers arrived on the banks of Snake River, the scene of so many trials and mishaps. . . . They struck the river just above the place where it entered the mountains, through which Messrs. Stuart [Hunt] and Crooks had vainly endeavored to find a passage. The river here was a rapid stream, four hundred yards in width, with high sandy banks, and here and there a scanty growth of willow."

These three visits to the same locality, below which the

Snake flows through a canyon, and above which through a level plain, determines the locality as being in the vicinity of what is now Huntington, Oregon, and this point being established it becomes possible to identify other places along the route, and while there is naturally a considerable variation between the distances traveled, as estimated by Mr. Hunt, and the accurate surveys of the Government, they are at least approximately correct, considering the circumstances.

"Caldron Linn" where Mr. Hunt and his party abandoned their boats and set out on foot, October 9th, 1811 (Chapter XXXIV), may have been the vicinity of Twin Falls and Shoshone Falls, Idaho. Having followed along the river for ten days, they took the advice of Indians whom they met, and leaving the river went along a trail across the prairie, through a dreary waste, till on November 21st they came "to the banks of a beautiful little stream, running to the West, and fringed with groves of cotton-wood and willow," probably the Boise River, which they followed to "its junction with the Snake River, which they found still running to the north. Before them was a wintry looking mountain covered with snow on all sides," possibly Malheur Butte. "In three days more they made seventy miles; fording two small rivers, the waters of which were very cold," the Pavette River and the Weiser, which was described as "A little willowed stream, running from the east" which they crossed on November 26th and to which they returned twenty days later, after "their ineffectual attempt to find a passage down the river" (Chapter XXXVI). The town of Weiser, Idaho, is now situated at this point.

It was here that they were able to prevail upon an Indian to guide them along the route, well-known to the Indians, to the Columbia River, and along which Mr. Stuart and his party returned the following summer, so that these members of the Hunt expedition were the first white men to travel the "Old Oregon Trail" so famous in song and story.

On December 21st they left their encampment where the City of Weiser now stands, and crossed the Snake River in a canoe

made of the skins of two horses, possibly in the vicinity of Old's Ferry, "on the 24th of December they turned their backs upon the disastrous banks of the Snake River, and struck their course westward for the mountains" (Chapter XXXVII), ascending the Burnt River, called "Woodvile Creek," in Chapter XLIV.

On December 28th, "they came upon a small stream winding to the north, through a fine level valley," the Baker Valley, and it is interesting in this connection that near the junction of Sutton Creek with Powder River, where they probably camped that night, there is black sand resembling gun powder, which probably suggested the name for Powder River. The "chain of woody mountains to the left [west], running to the north, and covered with snow," is the beautiful Elkhorn Range, the most striking feature of the Baker landscape.

"They kept along the valley for twenty-one miles on the 29th, suffering much from a continual fall of snow and rain, and being twice obliged to ford the icy stream" of the Powder River. Their encampment that night must have been almost at the present site of the village of North Powder, where "early in the following morning the squaw of Pierre Dorion, who had hitherto kept on without murmuring or flinching . . . enriched her husband with another child, as the fortitude and good conduct of the poor woman had gained for her the good will of the party, her situation caused concern and perplexity. Pierre, however, treated the matter as an occurrence that could soon be arranged and need cause no delay. He remained by his wife in the camp, with his other children and his horse, and promised soon to rejoin the main body, who proceeded on their march."

A few miles beyond the village of North Powder the river enters a canyon, and here the party "finding that the little river entered the mountains, they abandoned it, and turned off for a few miles among the hills, . . . thus, with difficulties augmenting at every step, they urged their toilsome way . . . half famished and faint of heart, when they came to

where a fair valley spread out before them, of great extent and several leagues in width, with a beautiful stream meandering through it." Here they obtained food from the Indians and rested in the famous Grande Ronde Valley, which in Chapter XLIV is described as "a vast plain, almost a dead level, sixty miles in circumference, of excellent soil, with fine streams meandering through it in every direction, their courses marked out in the wide landscape by serpentine lines of cottonwood trees and willows, which fringed their banks, and afforded sustenance to great numbers of beavers and otters. In traversing this plain, they passed, close to the skirts of the hills, a great pool of water, three hundred yards in circumference, fed by a sulphur spring, about ten feet in diameter, boiling in one corner," where now the Hot Lake Sanatorium is situated.

"In the course of the following morning the Dorion family made its appearance. Pierre came trudging along in the advance, followed by his valued, though skeleton steed, on which was mounted his squaw with her new-born infant in her arms, and her boy of two years old wrapped in a blanket and slung at her side. The mother looked as unconcerned as if nothing had happened to her." Previously, in Chapter XXXIV, Irving says of her, "and here we cannot but notice the wonderful patience, perseverance and hardihood of the Indian women, as exemplified in the conduct of the poor squaw of the interpreter. She . . . had two children to take care of; one four and the other two years of age. The latter, of course, she had frequently to carry on her back, in addition to the burden usually imposed upon the squaw, yet she had borne all her hardships without a murmur, and throughout this weary and painful journey had kept pace with the best of the pedestrians. Indeed, on various occasions in the course of this enterprise, she displayed a force of character that won the applause of the white men."

There is a lesson in this woman's story,  
So brave, yet meek, whose love did never fail,  
Undaunted courage was her crown and glory,  
The foremost mother on that famous trail.

*Note 1. That the route taken by Hunt's party along this portion of their journey has been hitherto uncertain is seen by*

(1) the map published by the U. S. Dept. of the Interior.

"Showing routes of principal explorers," etc., from data prepared by Frank Bond, chief clerk, by I. B. Berthong, chief of drafting division. This map locates routes of "Hunt (Astor) party, 1810-12," through the Wallowa country.

(2) Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society, March, 1910, "History of the Oregon Counties," etc., by Frederick V. Holman, p. 59. Speaking of the route of Hunt's party:

"On the way from the Snake River to the Columbia, the exact route of the party is not described nor can it be definitely ascertained, but undoubtedly it was through what is now Wallowa county, probably south of Wallowa Lake."

(3) "The Columbia River," by Wm. D. Lyman of Whitman College, p. 93. In referring to the part of the route after leaving Snake River:

"In another fortnight the cold and hungry party floundered painfully through the snow across the rugged mountains which lie between what is now known as the Powder River Valley and the Grande Ronde."

(4) The Works of Hubert Howe Bancroft, Vol. XXVIII, History of the N. W. Coast, Vol. II, 1800-1846. The History Co., San Francisco, 1886, p. 189: "They were now on Snake River, near where was subsequently old Fort Boise."

*Note 2. The identification of Baker Valley as the "Fine level valley" reached December 28th, 1811.*

The valley reached December 30th and in which the Hunt party spent New Year's Day, was undoubtedly the Grande Ronde and is so identified by Lyman in "The Columbia River," p. 94:

"Thither hastening eagerly they soon found themselves in a beautiful valley, which from the description must have been the Grande Ronde Valley."

The fact that the party under Mr. Stuart returned through it and described it and Hot Lake (Astoria, Chapter XLIV), makes it practically certain.

The valley reached December 28 was over 20 miles long running north and south (Chapter XXXVII), so that their route December 29 and part of December 30 was toward the north—and as the Grande Ronde Valley was over a low range of hills beyond where the “little river entered the mountains” it must necessarily follow that this valley was near the Grande Ronde, apparently south of it, and the only valley which answers this description, and furthermore exactly and entirely satisfies every condition is the Baker Valley. (1) The distance from the point on Snake River “above where the (Snake) river enters the mountains”—they left the Snake December 24th and arrived December 28, making “about 14 miles a day,”  $5 \times 14 = 70$  miles. (2) A fine level valley. (3) A small stream winding to the north. (5) “Woody mountains covered with snow” on the left hand (or west side as they were going northward). (6) The length of valley 21 miles to camping place on night of December 29th and apparently a few miles further December 30 (the exact length of valley is 22 miles. (7) The river at the north end entering the “mountains” (canyon above Thief Valley). (8) The location of the Grande Ronde Valley just beyond this across the low divide at Telocaset. (9) The fact that Stuart’s party “retracing the route” (Chapter XLIV, opening sentence), apparently went along the direct route from the Grande Ronde to the point on Snake River (Huntington) above where the river entered the mountains.

The identification of this valley with the Baker Valley satisfies every particular and there is no other valley that does so.



THE HISTORY OF RAILWAY TRANSPORTA-  
TION IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

By F. G. Young

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The Pacific Northwest has been quite distinctively the *last* region to be fully reached by the westward movement of American settlement across the continent. The culminating phase of that wave is just breaking over this region. It was, however, the *first* section not only of the Pacific Coast but of the whole territory west of the Missouri River to receive quite a body of forerunners, who came as home-builders. This early influx of settlers was continued without interruption, but as a very tiny stream, for some forty years before the first phase of the real wave of occupation arrived.<sup>1</sup> Its turn now has come as the "next" and last section of vacant public domain for occupation by a great moving mass of the American population.

The phenomena exhibited in the progress of the settlement of this region, the early beginning of it, the long period of very slow filling up, its coming last in order, were all largely determined by the conditions peculiar to its location and character as a possible home of a civilized community of considerable numbers. Not only its settlement but even the discovery and exploration of it were determined by stern conditions of access to it—of routes of travel and traffic leading to it. Its resources as soon as seen by the white man attracted. Conditions of transportation have mediated, as it were, as the prime factor at every stage of its history. Much as the history of the region has its key in a knowledge of the advance of the lines of exploration and travel to it and the provision of facilities of transportation, so is an idea of this growth of its system of transportation best gained by reference to those determining characteristic conditions of situation and natural features:

1. Its location is on the Pacific side of the continent where access to it from Atlantic inlets required the longest stretches of overland travel. During the centuries in which the outlines of the American continent were being developed by ex-

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<sup>1</sup>The census of the United States gives the population of this section in 1850 as 13,294, exclusive of Indians.

ploring expeditions setting out from Europe and seeking a "northwest passage" to the Orient this region was naturally the last to be traversed.

2. Access and occupation from the Asiatic side were also delayed by the wide expanse of the ocean lying between the two continents in this latitude.

From these two conditions pertaining to its location, affecting access to it, the coming of the white man to this region proceeded on lines of exploration converging from every direction. It was "rounded up," and a map, showing these lines of exploration upon which advances toward it were made nearly contemporaneously, suggests a picture of the ranging lines of approach of hunting parties in beating up game. It was the last recess of the continent to be brought upon the map. Bryant in his "Thanatopsis," in 1820, could still use it as representative of solitude.

3. However, its great river, the Columbia, has its source in the far interior, just across the backbone of the continent, from the source of the great Missouri. As soon as the search for a sea passage was given up, and during the long period while waterways were relied upon as the only avenues along which to penetrate continental areas, this fact stimulated exploration. Early, too, a new motive for securing an overland route had developed. The valleys of the Missouri and the Columbia lying end to end, as it were, incited to transcontinental exploration and to the choice of their courses for trading routes. When an easier and more direct line of river course travel across the continent was discovered through the substitution of the Platte for the Missouri, and using the south fork of the Columbia instead of the north, a practicable route for the pioneer settler was available and schemes for the securing of an all-rail highway for transcontinental travel and traffic soon blossomed out galore.

4. Furthermore, the fact that it was this part of the Pacific Coast that first became the possession of the vigorous young republic, with territory contiguous on the opposite side of the mountains from this region, and with a restless and almost

nomadic population on its western borders, determined that all the earlier schemes for a transcontinental highway necessarily contemplated its western terminus at the mouth of the Columbia, or at the head of the navigation of that river. The age-long lure of the oriental trade, for which no better passage-way seemed to offer itself than this almost uninterrupted line of waterways across the continent, strongly reinforced the desire for the construction of a railway to the Pacific Northwest Coast.

5. The Pacific Northwest, however, was destined to be eclipsed. The acquisition of California, just to the south of this region, and the discovery of rich mines of gold there leading to a rapid filling up of that part of the Coast by American settlers, about 1850, brought about the side-tracking of the region to the north. The Sacramento Valley and San Francisco Bay were alone, from that time on, seriously considered as the terminus of the proposed first transcontinental railway. The development of the Pacific Northwest tarried. The less glittering prizes offered through farming and grazing could overcome the drawback of isolation only with the few inherently restless.

The cumulative effect of these conditions of remoteness of this region from settled portions of the country to the east and to the south, and of its slow development by a farming and grazing population, was to confine its progress in securing of transportation for a long time mainly to that of opening rail connections with the larger masses of population in California and on the Atlantic side of the continent. Only just recently has a vigorous beginning been made on the features of a system of transportation for the region itself.

## CHAPTER II

*The Valley of the Columbia—Only After Centuries of Westward Exploration Placed Upon the Map—Becomes an Alluring American Interest on the Pacific—Suffers Eclipse.*

With the conditions controlling the transportation to this region at the successive stages in mind, attention is now directed to the course of that development as it is swerved by these conditions. Beginning with the opening of modern times a long train of explorers, with more or less extended intervals of time between successive expeditions, set out from the western nations intent upon finding a shorter passage to the Indies. To these the lands of the American continent were stumbling blocks. It required the contributions in turn of a Columbus, a Cabot, a Magellan, a Balboa, Verrazano and Hudson, a Verendrye, a trio of Spanish explorers—Heceta, Perez and Cuadra; a McKenzie and Gray, and Lewis and Clark, to develop the map of this region. Captain Robert Gray and Lewis and Clark not only added features to the map but also laid the basis for the claim of the United States to this part of the continent.

The mind of Thomas Jefferson, zealous for the advancement of scientific knowledge and for the pre-emption of the whole continent for the American idea of liberty and democracy, planned this last exploration. His purpose looked to the founding here of a sister republic rather than that of incorporating it as an integral part of the Federal Union. The difficulties of communication made no closer union feasible. The original motive of interest in this region had by this time been transformed from the purpose of finding an open sea route through this latitude to that of securing a practicable transcontinental passageway to a highly desirable territory from the eastern portion of the United States.

The Astor project for the exploitation on a grand scale of the fur-bearing resources of the region came as a natural sequel to the Lewis and Clark exploration. Though a financial

failure Astor's enterprise added much to our knowledge of the country and strengthened the basis of our claims to it.

When in 1819 we added the former rights of Spain to territory north of the 42nd parallel to our previous basis for claiming it, our title was clear to at least a share of this region; and the motive for securing means of transportation to it was reinforced. The more visionary and audacious in presenting schemes began to plan conditions for immediate and general occupation of it. Agitation in and out of Congress, projects for trade and colonization, for the planting of missionary stations among the Indians there, brought the region into the consciousness of the restless pioneering element among our population. The idea of rivalling the activities of the English traders already in this farthest West, contributed in stirring up the American frontiersmen to the point of action. Annual cavalcades of pioneers were early in the forties on the way across the plains to the valley of the Columbia. The building of a transcontinental railway to this territory was then only a matter of time.

But the Oregon country was not to continue the leading American interest on the Pacific. The discovery of gold in California, to the south of this region, and the influx of vast hordes of gold-seekers, who were to remain as settlers, just when this El Dorado became a possession of the United States, transferred the interest from the Columbia to the Sacramento Valley and made the building of a railroad thither a matter of but a few years, while the Pacific Northwest was, as it were, to fall into the background. Without equally alluring attractions settlement was slow and it was destined to remain in isolation for decades.

The fair promise of continuing to be the leading American community on the Pacific Coast, as its auspicious beginning seemed to presage, suffered eclipse. While there had been no actual railway construction during the three decades in which the Pacific Northwest, so to speak, held the center of the stage, from the very year of our undisputed right to sovereignty there plans and projects were being submitted for securing



adequate facilities of transportation to it. These advanced in definiteness and contemplated a railway as soon as the locomotive had been demonstrated as practicable. Thus during nearly a third of a century while the valley of the Columbia was our only territorial possession on the Pacific the development and maturing of these projects was in progress. Though there was no laying of rails "a fund of suggestion" was maturing through which the day was hastened for actual construction and which was brought into requisition in formulating the provisions of the charters of the roads that later were built. The evolution of the different types of these projects will be the subject of the next chapter.

### CHAPTER III

#### *The Rising Tide of Schemes and Agitation for a Transcontinental Railway to the Oregon Country, 1818-1850.*

Through the treaties with England and Spain, 1818 and 1819, respectively, our national foothold on the Pacific Coast was fully acknowledged. Our southern boundary was the forty-second parallel; but until 1846 we were not able to come to an agreement with Great Britain on a line for a northern boundary. In the interval the status of "joint occupation" obtained for the coast between latitudes forty-two degrees and fifty-four degrees and forty minutes north. Here then was a possession on the opposite side of the continent, with resources largely undetermined, though some were known to be of exceedingly great value; through it was the natural gateway to the commerce of the Pacific and to that of the Orient. American explorers had proven the practicability of the overland route.

The American frontier was being pushed rapidly to the west. Traders, missionaries and home-builders even, representing our nationality, were defying difficulties and dangers and in regularly increasing numbers were making their way over the continent to this possession facing the western sea. Invention was making available more and more effective means for overcoming distance. All these circumstances appealed to the national sense of duty and strengthened the motive urging the undertaking of the construction of a transcontinental highway.

Responses were not slow in coming. An anonymous communication appeared in the *American Farmer* of Baltimore, July 9, 1819, suggesting the *Bactrian Camel* as the means by which the speedy communication between the opposite sides of the continent might be obtained. The same need of binding together these remote portions of the country was referred to that Washington had urged in pleading for closer communication between the Ohio Valley and the Atlantic seaboard. "Less broken intercourse," must be had, "with the opposite coast of our continent, before the settlements, which must,

very soon, take root and spread along it, shall have their interests developed in other directions, and be estranged from their natural and beneficial connection with their kindred of the Atlantic mother country."<sup>1</sup>

The very next year this same consideration is urged, without acknowledgment, however, to the unknown author. This time by an engineer, Robert Mills, of Baltimore. His idea was to have a canal connect the waters of the Atlantic Coast with those of the Mississippi Valley; then he would penetrate the continent to the west with the steamboat on the Missouri; use would be made of the Columbia in like manner; the distance between the heads of navigation on these two rivers, estimated at 340 miles, should be spanned by a portage railway.

This suggestion came some ten years before the locomotive had been proven a success in the historic Manchester and Liverpool trial. During the early part of these ten years interest in our Pacific Coast possessions had been heightened by Dr. John Floyd, through pressure of measures before Congress for taking possession of them. In the latter part of this decade there was strenuous agitation of projects of colonization by Hall J. Kelley and others in and around Boston. When the railroad became a recognized success with us application of it was proposed from many sources for serving as a bond to bring into normal union the distant sections of the country.

Until very near the close of the forties the Oregon country was regularly the region in which the proposed western terminus lay. Judge S. W. Dexter, of Ann Arbor, Michigan, and Dr. Samuel Bancroft Barlow, of Granville, Massachusetts, contented themselves in proposing routes and schemes. Later in the thirties Dr. Hartwell Carver, of Rochester, New York, and John Plumbe, of Dubuque, Iowa, separately, not only proposed plans, but memorializing Congress undertook the promotion of them. Rev. Samuel Parker, too, in the record of his overland trip, taken in 1835, comments on the feasibility of the construction of a railroad from the Atlantic to the Pacific Oceans.

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<sup>1</sup>Quoted by Cleveland and Powell, "Promotion and Capitalization of Railroads in the United States," pp. 261-2.

During the forties, John Plumbé continues his petitioning and memorializing for a charter and grant of lands. But the representative promoters of a transcontinental railway during this decade were Asa Whitney and George Wilkes, both of New York. Whitney as a merchant had spent some time in China and Japan and became completely taken with the idea of a railroad across the American continent as a means of making "the United States the center and axle of the commerce of the world";<sup>1</sup> such a road would "invite an indefinite and incalculable amount of exchanges across the continent, between the Atlantic and the Pacific States, between the Atlantic slope and Eastern Asia, and between Europe and Asia, which could not otherwise be afforded, and which but for this, would never take place."<sup>2</sup> "He gave up business, and with the fanaticism of a Mad Mullah preaching a holy war devoted ten years of his life and all of his fortune to advocating the immediate building of a transcontinental railroad."<sup>3</sup>

His plan contemplated individual proprietorship. His request was regularly for a grant of land sixty miles wide throughout the whole length of the road, thirty miles on each side. The Government was, however, to be paid ten cents an acre for this domain of nearly 100,000,000 acres. This scheme of Whitney's represented the extreme of the private ownership with subsidy idea. Other promoters, urging plans involving private ownership relied upon a corporate organization and called for grants of less royal proportions.

Whitney expected to finance the building of the road with the returns to be secured from the sales of lands. Such sales were to be achieved through an elaborate process of colonization conducted as the building was in progress. The promoters under corporate organization depended upon stock subscriptions or the loan of the national credit.

George Wilkes was, on the other hand, the most active advocate of a transcontinental railway as a government en-

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<sup>1</sup>The reports of committees, 31st Congress, first session, Vol I, No. 140, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>3</sup>Carter, *When Railroads Were New*, p. 228.

terprise. He urged the construction of it out of direct appropriations, claiming that the sales of public lands would be so stimulated that "in less than one year from the marking out of the line more than thirty millions would be poured into the treasury. . . ." Furthermore, he held that "its vast revenues," under government operation, "would not only enable the government, after paying off the cost, to relieve the country of the burden of almost every tax, whether imposed or otherwise, but afford a surplus. . . ."<sup>1</sup>

The result of turning this national duty, as he regarded it, over to private enterprise would, as he contended, be initially a great fraud perpetrated upon the unsuspecting public in the first wave of excitement caused by a demonstration in a formal beginning of construction; later, if the work was prosecuted at all, a monopoly of menacing proportions would be developed, probably under the control of a foreign government. All this criticism was directed against Whitney's project.<sup>2</sup>

Wilkes pressed his project for a "national railroad" vigorously. It was submitted to Congress in December, 1845. A memorial by him "praying for an expression from the legislature of Oregon to the Senate and House of Representatives on the subject of his project of a national railroad from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean . . ." reached that territory in September, 1846. It elicited favorable comment and brought out resolutions adopted at a public meeting held in Oregon City, soon after the receipt of his memorial and pamphlet from the East. The main suggestion looking toward co-operation with him was for the sending of a delegate to Washington to support the Wilkes project along with Oregon interests pertaining grants of lands for the early settlers and for "nothing short of 54 degrees and 40 minutes north" for the boundary of Oregon territory on the north.<sup>3</sup>

In Congress, the Committee on Roads and Canals, to whom the Wilkes memorial, "with numerous petitions and memorials

<sup>1</sup>Wilkes, "The History of Oregon, Geographical and Political," reprinted in "The Washington Historical Quarterly," Vol. II, pp. 190-192.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 277-279.

<sup>3</sup>Oregon Spectator, September 3, 17, and October 3, 1846.

upon the subject of constructing a railroad . . .” had been referred on July 13, 1846, made what amounted to an adverse report. In this report it is first noted that Congress has unquestionable constitutional power “to grant the prayer of the petitioners, by proceeding to construct a thoroughfare from a point west of the State of Missouri to the mouth of the Columbia River, for military, for post office and for commercial purposes.” Furthermore, “upon the importance of the American commerce and trade in the Pacific Ocean,” there was “the same pleasing unanimity of opinion. Of its present and prospective value more than one hundred members of Congress, and a far greater number of editors and pamphleteers and essayists, and bookmakers have treated in a manner more or less elaborate, within the last five years.” To indicate the position taken by the committee in their report, they go on to say, “All consider it (American trade in the Pacific) large, growing and worthy of proper and reasonable encouragement. If confined within suitable limits, measures tending to foster and promote this trade and commerce, will, it is believed, be decidedly popular with all classes of citizens. While the prudent and sober-minded would, probably, be unwilling to see the revenues or the property of the nation pledged, or in any wise *committed* to the construction of a costly railroad of some 2,800 or 3,000 miles in length, stretching across vast uninhabited prairies and lofty mountains, involving an original outlay of at least a hundred millions of dollars, and a large annual cost for superintendence and repairs, it is believed they would cheerfully assist to open an eligible avenue, if one could be assured at a small cost compared with the object sought to be realized.”<sup>1</sup> The committee had examined quite carefully Colonel Fremont’s report of his explorations and had consulted Colonel Benton on the matter of the “best commercial route to Oregon.” Senator Benton had suggested the improvement of the Missouri to the Great Falls and also of the Columbia and the Clark’s Fork. By so doing the limits

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<sup>1</sup>“*Railroad to the Pacific Ocean*,” reports of committees, 29th Congress, first session, House of Representatives, No. 773, pp. 1 (Ser. No. 491).



of steamboat navigation on these rivers could be brought within 150 miles of each other. Over this distance "the goods of India and of China may be transported . . . in many ways, as they are light and of sufficient value to justify the expense."

The committee fell in with the idea of Senator Benton and earnestly recommended to the House a bill making provision for a survey to ascertain the feasibility of the pass between the headwaters of the Missouri and those of the Columbia and for determining the practicability of the improvement of those rivers for navigation. "If this route," they say, "upon examination, proves *impracticable*, the committee greatly fear that a cheap, safe, and speedy communication with our possessions upon the Pacific, through the *territories we now own*, may not reasonably be expected to be obtained for many years."<sup>1</sup> While several expressions in the report of this committee are quite significant, at least on the position of the committee itself, it is to be noted that the prize of the trade with the Orient figures as the dominant motive rather than the binding of the Oregon country closely with the remainder of the nation.

Wilkes' strictures on Whitney's project seemed only to incite the latter to more vigorous efforts to secure a charter and land grant for the road. He was before Congress with memorials in 1845, 1846 and again in 1848. The Committee of the House on Roads and Canals, or a majority of it, if the language of its report is to be accepted as evidence, was brought to the point of simply worshipping the man and his project. "Much deference is due," they say, "to one who has so long, and with such effect, devoted himself to this great object, and who has in these labors compassed sea and land, traversed the globe, passed through the states of the Union again and again, and himself penetrated eight hundred miles of the almost trackless route which he thinks most expedient to be adopted."<sup>2</sup> Again, they express their sense of the backing of Whitney in

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>2</sup>Whitney's Railroad to the Pacific, reports of committees, 31st Congress, first session House of Representatives, No. 140, p. 2 (Ser. No. 583).

the country at large by the following reference to the measure of pressure that had been brought to bear upon them: "The voice of the most eminent men of the country, the public action of twenty separate states of the Union, renewed in some cases for years, and the favorable reports of special and standing committees of both houses of Congress, heretofore and repeatedly made, with great unanimity, all in favor of Mr. Whitney's proposal, together with a corresponding action of a great variety of public meetings and corporate bodies, throughout the length and breadth of the republic, for several years past, augmenting in number and zeal with the progress of time. . ."

Moreover, the committee is impressed that "all feel that this road is wanted, and must be made." For many reasons they "most profoundly deprecate the undertaking of this work by the general government in any form whatever." They would not loan the public credit for the accomplishment of this design as was proposed by one of the plans submitted to them. The following language indicates the limit to which this majority of the committee committed themselves in favor of Whitney's project: "Your committee have reason to believe that the government itself, with all its means and credit, would sink under the attempt to build this road on any other plan than that of Mr. Whitney. Again, after animadverting on the positions taken by national conventions that had just been held at St. Louis and Memphis for promoting a transcontinental railway, they say: The question of *means*, therefore, is exhausted, and falls to the ground, without hope of rescue, on any other plan than that of Mr. Whitney."

In the same confident tone they met all the objections that had been brought against Whitney's plan on the ground of the vast grant of public domain involved. The country would net more through that disposition of its lands than in any other way. The risk is all his; his is the only feasible plan. Not only would no other plan than Mr. Whitney's succeed, but they could not refrain "from expressing their solicitude in re-

gard to the great and momentous interests of our country which are contingent on the execution of this magnificent design."<sup>1</sup>

In contrast with the main purpose to be achieved by a transcontinental railway as conceived by the committee in 1846, this committee in 1850, March 13, states the objects of the enterprise as follows: "First, your committee think that it would bind and cement, on the largest scale, and in the most enduring form, the commercial, social and political relations of our Eastern and Western domain, as naturally divided and marked out by the summit of the ridge between the Mississippi and the Pacific. A primary effect of this work would naturally be, by surmounting the obstacles of nature, to bring into the most intimate commercial contact the two vast regions of productive industry which are destined to be on the Atlantic and Pacific slopes of North America, and thus by creating an everlasting bond of interest, to cement between the same quarters social and political ties equally intimate and equally enduring."<sup>2</sup>

This enthusiasm for the Whitney project did not, however, avail. It was pitted against the opposing idea of a national railroad to the Pacific; it was checked by the rising spirit of sectionalism, for it contemplated a route quite to the north; local jealousies of cities aspiring to become the Eastern terminus also developed opposition.

The vigorous agitation by the exponents of the idea of a transcontinental railway for more than a decade; the migrations of the Oregon pioneers throughout the forties to the valley of the Columbia; and the grand rush of the argonauts in 1849 to California—these all contributed to bring the idea most vividly into the public consciousness of the nation and nearer to realization.

The following abstract of the salient features of the different schemes for overland transportation to the Pacific developed before 1850 may be of service:

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 2-7, 5 and 9.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 2, 42.

1. *Author*—"American" (anonymous), July 9, 1819, *American Farmer of Balto.*  
*Means*—The Bactrian Camel for rapid communication rather than for travel and traffic.  
*Purpose*—To bind together populations of opposite shores of continent.  
*Route*—Not defined except that it needed to be more direct than via the Missouri River.

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2. *Author*—Robert Mills, 1820, "A Treatise on Inland Navigation."  
*Means*—A portage railway or turnpike across the mountains between highest navigable portions of the Missouri and the Columbia Rivers.  
*Purpose*—To enable the Government to wield its potent energies with effect on the Pacific Coast in the interests of the Union.  
*Route*—The Missouri and the Columbia Rivers.

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3. *Author*—Hall J. Kelley, 1829. "Geographical Sketch of Oregon."  
*Means*—Grant of land, alternate sections, thirty miles wide, fifteen on each side of road.  
*Purpose*—To establish quick and direct communication between the Mississippi Valley and the Pacific Ocean.  
*Route*—From Missouri River, near mouth of the Kansas, crossing backbone of Continent near 43d parallel, then along the Valley of the Snake to the Columbia River, near Fort Walla Walla (Wallula at the present time), and terminating at the southern extremity of Puget Sound.

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4. *Author*—S. W. Dexter, February 6, 1832, *Emigrant of Ann Arbor.*  
*Means*—A national project or the organization of a company and a grant of three millions of acres of land for the purpose.

*Purpose*—No special purpose named.

*Route*—From New York along south shores of Lakes Erie, Michigan, up the Platte, through South Pass, down Lewis Fork of Columbia.

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5. *Author*—Dr. Samuel Bancroft Barlow, 1834, Westfield (Mass.) *Intelligencer*.

*Means*—Annual appropriations of the surplus from the duties and taxes continued at existing rates after public debt was paid.

*Route*—Virtually identical with that suggested by Judge Dexter.

*Purpose*—Settlement of Far West would be facilitated, commerce would be stimulated, and sections of country would be bound together by stronger ties of common interest.

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6. *Author*—John Plumbe, 1836, memorial against Whitney's railroad scheme.

*Means*—Alternate sections on each side of route turned over to company; reserved sections at double price would prevent any cost to Government. Wide distribution of stock, twenty million shares at five dollars each.

*Purpose*—No data.

*Route*—From Lake Michigan, across Wisconsin and Iowa over the northern route to Oregon.

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7. *Author*—Dr. Hartwell Carver, August 11, 1837, *Morning Courier and New York Enquirer for the Country*.

*Means*—Varied. Twenty miles either side of the road, or eight million acres, to be sold him at cost of \$1.25 or 50 cents an acre, to be paid for in stock of company.

*Purpose*—Commerce of Asia and the Eastern Isles.

*Route*—Lake Michigan to the South Pass with branches to San Francisco Bay and the mouth of the Columbia.

8. *Author*—Asa Whitney, 1841 or 1844, project for a railroad to the Pacific; memorials to Congress.

*Means*—Grant of land sixty miles wide, thirty on each side of road.

*Purpose*—To bind together the opposite shores of the continent; to make America the axle of the commerce of the world.

*Route*—From Lake Michigan to the Pacific Coast.

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9. *Author*—George Wilkes, History of Oregon, Geographical and Political (Colyer), 1845.

*Means*—Appropriations by Congress; expected increased sales of public domain would easily furnish means.

*Purpose*—Mainly to get trade of Orient.

*Route*—The "Old Oregon Trail."

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10. *Author*—Albert Pike, at Memphis convention, 1849.

*Means*—Loan of National credit.

*Purpose and Route*—No data.

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11. *Author*—Thomas H. Benton, his prediction, 1844.

Championed National project between territories. At first favored portage between highest points accessible with steamboats on Missouri and the Columbia. Later favored a Southern route. Benton is credited with having defeated Whitney's project before Congress in 1848. Wilkes' project found most favor during this period in the Oregon settlements.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE.

*Bancroft, Hubert Howe*—History of California, V. VII., Chapter XIX, pp. 494-514 (Volume XXIV of the general series of Pacific States Histories).

Bancroft's narrative furnishes basis of other secondary sources. These, however, commonly add one or more names of early projectors of schemes and quote freely from the favorite they introduce into the list of advocates of a transcontinental



railway. Bancroft gives by far the most details pertaining to discussions, in and out of Congress, of the plans proposed.

*Smalley, Eugene V.*—History of the Northern Pacific Railroad. Chapters VI. and VII., pp. 51-68.

Smalley champions Dr. Samuel Bancroft Barlow of Granville, Mass., as the first advocate of a transcontinental railroad. Bancroft had not mentioned Barlow. Smalley quotes in full Barlow's communication to the *Intelligencer* of Westfield in which the plan is set forth. George Wilkes' plan gets its first notice and Hartwell Carver's claim advanced by Bancroft is ridiculed.

*Davis, John P.*—The Union Pacific Railway, Chapters I. and II., pp. 1-34.

Davis presents Judge S. W. Dexter as author of the first plan for a transcontinental railway. His editorial in the *Emigrant*, February 6. 1832, in which his suggestion is made is quoted from. Robert Mills, as an advocate of a Pacific railway, is mentioned and John Plumbe is brought prominently into the list of advocates of such a highway.

*Cleveland, Frederick A. and Powell, Fred Wilbur*—Railroad Promotion and Capitalization in the United States. Chapter XVI, pp. 257-273.

An anonymous contributor to the *American Farmer*, of Baltimore, July 9, 1819, is given credit for "the germ of the idea" of a transcontinental railroad. These authors seem to have pretty thoroughly ransacked the material extant pertaining to these projects and compare and criticize them to good purpose.

*Carter, Charles Frederick*—When Railroads Were New. Chapter VII., pp. 226-230.

Very brief notice, devoted to Plumbe and Whitney. Gives helpful contemporary criticism of latter.

## NOTES

### OREGON HISTORICAL LITERATURE TO BE ENRICHED.

John Minto, in collaboration with a personal friend, is preparing for publication a book outlining his life and work from his boyhood years in England, down to the present time in Oregon.

Ex-Governor T. T. Geer has well advanced an account of "Fifty Years in Oregon." Mr. Geer's work will be taken up largely with estimates and characterizations of the men who have had leading parts in the up-building of Oregon.

Thomas Fletcher Royal at the time of his death, March 8, had ready for the press his work, entitled "Trail Followers and Empire Builders." In it he gives the story of pioneer life in Illinois and Oregon. Mr. Royal came to Oregon in 1853 and was prominent in educational work and as a Methodist Episcopal minister.

### A LONG ROLL OF EMINENT DEAD.

The last quarter has witnessed the passing of many of Oregon's prominent men. A partial list, with dates of their death, comprises the following names:

Frank W. Benson, April 14.

T. W. Davenport, April 18.

Lafayette Grover, May 11.

John C. Carson, June 1.

George W. McBride, June 29.

The political records of the state show that Governor Benson had a strong hold on the Oregon people. He began his active life as a school teacher, served in the land office and in the county clerk's office at Roseburg, practiced law and in 1906 was elected secretary of state. After the promotion of Governor Chamberlain to the United States Senate, Secretary Benson became governor. He was re-elected secretary of state in 1910.

The readers of The Quarterly must have felt well acquainted with Mr. Davenport. His many frank and strong papers con-

tributed to its pages have surely elicited the admiration of all who had not earlier the good fortune of knowing him personally.

He served many terms in the state legislature, was for a time Indian agent and from 1895 to 1899 was state land agent. He was always the ardent, fearless and able advocate of what appeared to him the cause of humanity. His place is among the elite of Oregon. He did noble civic service from his coming to the state in 1851 until the date of his death.

Ex-Governor LaFayette Grover, who died on May 10, had a leading part in the public affairs of Oregon from the time of his coming in 1851 to the close of his term as United States Senator in 1883. He compiled the legislation of the Provisional Government period, adjusted claims arising out of depredations of Rogue River Indians, 1854,<sup>1</sup> and those due for services and supplies furnished during the Yakima War.<sup>2</sup> He was a member of the State Constitutional convention, one of the most active. When Oregon was admitted he was the state's first representative in Congress. In 1870 he was elected governor, mainly on the Chinese exclusion issue. During his two terms he was very active in securing title for the state to the lands inuring to it under the different congressional grants. In his term the Willamette Falls canal and locks were constructed, but the entrance upon the policy of subsidizing railways was blocked by his vetoing a bill for Portland to issue \$300,000 of bonds to aid Ben Holladay in building a railroad from Portland up the west side of the Willamette Valley. In 1876 he came into the national limelight, so to speak, when he refused to certify the election of John W. Watts as one of the Republican presidential electors on the ground that his posi-

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<sup>1</sup>His associates were Addison C. Gibbs, governor of Oregon in 1862-66, and G. H. Ambrose.

<sup>2</sup>This war began early in October, 1855, and lasted about one year. It was caused by a general uprising of most of the Indian tribes then in Oregon and Washington Territories in order to drive the whites from the country. As the military force of the United States in these territories was weak, volunteers were called into service by the respective governors and the Indians were subdued. By virtue of an act of Congress passed August 18, 1856, the Secretary of War appointed Captains A. J. Smith and Rufus Ingalls, of the Regular Army, and Capt. L. F. Grover, of the volunteer forces, as commissioners to audit all claims connected with this war.

tion as postmaster disqualified him. As United States Senator he was active in securing the adoption of exclusion of Chinese immigrants.

John C. Carson contributed many years of service to the public as a member of the city council of Portland and as a member of the state legislature.

Geo. W. McBride was eight years secretary of state, from 1887 to 1894, inclusive. He was then elected to succeed J. N. Dolph as United States Senator. Upon completing his term in 1901 he was appointed United States Commissioner for the Louisiana Purchase Exposition. He was a member of the distinguished McBride family that numbers so many eminent representatives in the annals of the Pacific Coast.

The Quarterly hopes to enlist the aid of some of the ready pens of the pioneers to give the tribute of careful estimates of the activities and personalities of these who died during the last few months and also of those whom we have lost in recent years. The Quarterly has not yet contained worthy tributes to such historic personages as Charles B. Bellinger, John B. Waldo and Harvey W. Scott.

#### THIRTY-NINTH ANNUAL PIONEER REUNION.

The annual reunion of the Oregon Pioneers—the 39th—held in Portland on June 21, was again about as delightful an occasion as the human heart can reach to. The registered attendance was thirteen hundred and fifty, and the average age was sixty-nine years. When it is remembered that no one who came to, or was born in, Oregon later than the year 1859, is eligible to membership in the Oregon Pioneer Association, it will be seen that this was a remarkable gathering. The youngest person in attendance was fifty-two years old and the oldest,—Captain James Blakeley, of Brownsville, Oregon, a pioneer of 1846—was in his ninety-ninth year. He will be ninety-nine on November 26th next, and is in excellent health, both physically and mentally. He rendered excellent service at the head of a company of volunteers in the Yakima Indian war.

The banquet, the annual address and the other exercises were all fitted to bring keenest enjoyment to the heroes and heroines who won Oregon and laid here the foundations of a most promising civilization. Colonel Robert A. Miller was elected president; Joseph Buchtel, vice president; George H. Himes, secretary, and Charles E. Ladd, treasurer.

#### STATE PARK AT CHAMPOEG.

The Champoeg meeting of May 2, 1843, at which was effected the first political organization of American settlements on the Pacific Coast, was of the highest order of historic importance. Mr. Joseph Buchtel's patriotic efforts to secure adequate public grounds at Champoeg for surroundings for an appropriate monument, auditorium and park are reported as crowned with success.

A ten-acre tract has been secured to be added to the three acres already owned by the state. The funds were raised through private subscription.

A growing historical sense will enable our future legislatures to see the propriety of having this financial burden assumed by the state and also provision made for the erection of suitable monumental structures.







# THE OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

ORGANIZED DECEMBER 17, 1898

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DAVID THOMPSON, PATHFINDER

AND THE  
COLUMBIA RIVER\*

*By* T. C. Elliott

This anniversary year on the Columbia River has special significance to those residing along its upper courses as well as to those at its mouth, and it is well worth while for the people of Kettle Falls and vicinity to rehearse the career and honor the name of the first man of the white races who explored and made permanent record of the sources of this magnificent stream, and who was the first to traverse its entire length from source to mouth. Strangely enough the work of this really great and notable man is just coming to public prominence, particularly so any account of his achievements in the basin of the Columbia; even the historians of our river have failed to award him much more than passing notice. Brief mention only is possible within the limits of this address; and let it first be stated that one of the few geographical points to which the name of this man, David Thompson, was once attached (by himself or by some of his associates)—the only locality in fact ever so designated on the main course of the Columbia—is the stretch of rapids a few miles below these Falls and now locally known as Rickey Rapids in recognition of your pioneer settler, Mr. John Rickey. On the early maps used by the Hudson's Bay Company these rapids were noted as the Thompson Rapids, doubtless because of some incident as yet unknown to us.

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\*An address delivered at Kettle Falls before the Pioneer Association of Stevens County, Washington, on June 23, 1911.

Our interest in any one is always enlivened by his likeness or some bit of writing from his hand. Something of what David Thompson wrote in his journal (now to be seen at Toronto, Canada), and thus actually recorded while here at Kettle Falls one hundred years ago this very week, will serve as an introduction to him personally. His journal reads:

"June 29th, 1811, Saturday, very fine day but cloudy. Finished the canoe to one board in each side \* \* . All the timbers of the other canoe got burnt by neglect.\* \* \* . The indians speared six salmon, they gave us two. They carry the aversion they know the salmon to have to the taste of the water in which men and animals and especially salmon have been washed to superstition. They did (not) begin spearing till near noon, as the spearer had seen the bearer of a deathshad boy since dead; to have speared fish with such unclean eyes would have driven all the salmon away and he pacified himself with a decoction of the scraped bark of the red hem(lock); thus cleaned he proceeded to work. The salmon are about 15 to 25 to 30 pounds weight here, well tasted, but they have cut all their feet retaining all their meat; their flesh is red and they are extremely well made.

"June 30th, Sunday, a fine cool cloudy day, in the afternoon slight rain. they speared eleven salmon, gave us three, one is a fine one. Finished the boards of the canoe, rested the rest of the day.

"July 1st, Monday, a very fine day. Men went for gum which they gathered and made and gummed a very small part of the canoe. One salmon. Engaged Billaris as hunter etc. Sent off the balance to Juco. Gave the horses to the care of the Chief here and killed one for food.

July 2nd, Tuesday, very fine day, gummed the canoe and arranged many little affairs."

The following day he started down the Columbia in this one canoe with seven companions of French and Indian blood on that first journey of a white man from Ilth-koy-ape, as the Indians called these Falls, to the ocean. The night of the 5th found them encamped some distance below the mouth of the



Okanogan river, on the 9th they were a little way above the mouth of Snake or Lewis river, and on the 14th or 16th arrived at Fort Astoria, there to be greeted by Duncan McDougal and other former associates of Mr. Thompson in the Northwest Company, but then partners and managers in the Pacific Fur Company of John Jacob Astor. These people had arrived in the Columbia by sea during the month of April preceding.

You ask how did David Thompson arrive at Kettle Falls in June, 1811, and whether by chance or design? He came on horseback from Spokane House, a trading post or fort then already established, erected the previous year at the junction of the little Spokane with the main Spokane river by one of his men, presumably Finan McDonald. This seems a little early to find the name Spokane in written form, but so it appears; "Skeetshoo" was the designation given by David Thompson to the Spokane river and to the lake later known as the Coeur d'Alene.

He had reached Spokane House by the "Skeetshoo road" or trail from the Kullyspell (Pend d'Oreille) river and tribe. The Kullyspell (or Saleesh) river and lake were already familiar to him through several months spent in exploring and trading there during 1809-10 and the establishment of two trading posts, one near to the Thompson Falls, Montana, of the present day. To the Saleesh he had come by the "Kullyspell Lake Indian Road" from the Kootenay river, where he left the canoes used in descending the Kootenay from a point in British Columbia opposite to the waters of the Upper Columbia Lake and distant from that lake not more than three miles across the low divide since known as Canal Flat, but to him as McGillivray's Portage. This portage he had reached by canoes UP the Columbia from Canoe river at the extreme bend of the river in British Columbia, so named by himself because of his enforced encampment there from January until April of this same year 1811 in preparation for his "sortie" to the mouth of the Columbia. The occasion for this "sortie" was the permission given to him or the instructions received from his partners of the Northwest Company at their annual meeting

at Fort William on Lake Superior in the summer of 1810; for the "Northwesters" had declined to join with Mr. Astor in the enterprise to occupy the mouth of the Columbia and expected to develop the Indian trade there on their own account, as they afterward did.

But let me revert to David Thompson's own records. He was at Astoria on the 16th of July and from there visited Cape Disappointment at the mouth of the river, but at once started up river again, for his journal reads: "August 8th, 1811, Chapaton River, at noon, latitude 48 degrees 36 minutes 26 seconds north, longitude 112 degrees 22 minutes 15 seconds west. Laid up our canoe." The Chapaton (Shahaptin) was the Snake river and this entry shows him to have been at the mouth of the Palouse river, a well known camping place for the Nez Percés Indians; from whence the party took to the hurricane decks of as many Nez Percés horses and followed the well established Indian trail to the Spokane (Aug. 18th) and thence to Kettle Falls again (Aug. 23rd). By the third of September he was again prepared with canoe and provisions and proceeded UP the Columbia, through the Arrow Lakes and the Dalles des Mort to Boat Encampment on Canoe river, and from there crossed the Rocky Mountains again to the Athabasca in October.

I mention the details of the career of David Thompson in the year 1811 because these facts are not yet familiar to the residents of our Columbia river region, because they are pertinent to our anniversary season and because their narration serves to reveal to us the traits individual to the man. At the age of forty-one years David Thompson thus traversed every reach of this magnificent river from source to mouth, a physical achievement for a man even at the present day; but much more than a mere physical achievement by him because his record gave first to the world its knowledge of the long sought for source and windings of this river, as a few years previous he had been the first to discover and mark the real source of the mighty Mississippi river.

David Thompson was a "goer". If anything further is needed to indicate this let it be said that during the last days of April, 1810, he was at Pend d'Oreille lake of Northern Idaho, and in July of the same year was at the Rainy Lakes near Lake Superior (and probably at Fort William), and on the 6th of September of the same year was again near the head waters of the Saskatchewan preparing to cross the divide on to the Columbia to complete his journey to its mouth and establish the rights of the "Northwesters" on the entire river. He journeyed to the Rainy Lakes because he had an appointment to keep there with his partners, and he hurried back again because he had a duty to perform for his Company and for his Country. Those were not yet the days of fees to porters in Pullman cars or even of the Rocky Mountain stage coach, but time and distance yielded to the energy and endurance of such men as the fur traders.

David Thompson was possessed of great physical courage and ability to lead men. You or I would hesitate to cross the Rocky Mountains on foot after the winter begins, but let me quote from "The Journals of Alex. Henry and David Thompson" (including Dr. Coues' admirable notes) a resumé of the story of his terrible journey across the continental divide in mid-winter; prefacing with the explanation that provisions were very low that Fall of 1810 at the few fur trading establishments on the Saskatchewan, and that owing to sudden hostility of the Piegan Indians the mountain pass used in 1807-8 and 9 was closed to Mr. Thompson then and he was compelled to seek an entirely new and unknown one.

"Nov. 7th, 1810. At 11 a. m. Pichette and Pierre arrived \* from Mr. Thompson's camp. They left him on Panbian river, with all his property, on his way to the Columbia, cutting his road through a wretched, thick, woody country, over mountains and gloomy muskagues and nearly starving, animals being very scarce in that quarter. His hunter \* could only find a chance wood buffalo on which to subsist; when that failed they had to recourse to what flour and other douceurs Mr. Thompson had—in fact the case is pitiful. \* \* On

Dec. 5th, 1810 Thompson had reached a point on Athabasca r ; which he gives as Lat. \* \* From this place he dispatched men to Mr. Henry at Rocky Mt. House asking for pemmican and supplies. \* He was in dire extremities, and his men were disaffected to the verge of mutiny by the sufferings they shared with him. On the 15th the thermometer was minus 30° \* On Saturday, the 29th, thermometer 31° he started. \* \* On New Year's Day 1811, thermometer minus 24°, the dogs were unable to move their loads, a cache was made \* Thompson struggled on, with ever-increasing difficulty and danger ; but there was no alternative. Jan. 4th, he came to a bold defile whence issued the main Athabasca r., 'the canoe road to pass to the w. side of the Mts.' \* Jan. 8th, the brook still seemingly the main stream dwindling away ; Mts. about 1 mile apart, 2000 to 3000 feet high. \* Thursday, Jan. 10th, crossed the Height of Land. Jan. 11th, held DOWN a brook. \* Jan. 13th, sent back to Height of Land for some things left there, but wolverines had destroyed everything except 5 lbs of balls. Jan. 14th, Dogs could no longer haul their loads, owing to depth and softness of the snow ; reduced all baggage to a weight of about 3 & ½ pieces, and abandoned everything not absolutely necessary, including his tent, courage of the man fast sinking. \* Jan. 15th, sighted mountains on other side of the Columbia. \* Jan. 21st, Down to the Columbia. Jan. 22nd, Down the Columbia 1 m. to a bold brook and 1 & ½ m. to a cedar point. F. d. P. men dispirited, 'useless as old women' \* determined to return to Canoe river and wait for men, goods and provisions and build canoes." So we see that even in these desperate circumstances he was ready to proceed, and had he been able to cross the mountains by the Howse Pass in September or October, 1810, in all probability he would have pushed on down the Columbia to its mouth during the winter and anticipated the Astor party in actual occupancy. Failing in the effort he proceeded more slowly.

Courage and ability to endure hardships were but common attributes of the fur trader, but ability to observe intelligently and record with continual care the daily events and experiences,

and the habits and names of the Indian tribes and localities was not so common. David Thompson kept his note-book or journal under all conditions of weather or travel, and made record of the daily camping places in scientific terms and with such exactness that these localities can be checked today with scarce a variation. His instruments were small, only such as were held in the hand, but his observations were accurate. A prominent engineer and scholar of Canada has had occasion to follow many of the routes of travel and gives testimony to this fact. And this ability and habit were not based upon the diploma of any school or institution of learning, not at all. At the age of seven years and a poor boy David Thompson had been placed by his father in a charity school in London, and remained there seven years learning all that was taught, which included a little navigation; and reading all that came in his way, for he was an omniverous reader. When about fourteen years old (about 1783) the Hudson's Bay Company applied for a suitable boy to enter their service and he was then apprenticed to that Company for a period of seven years, and began life in the fur trade along the bleak shores of Hudson's Bay. His companionships were improved to the utmost, and a spirit of ambition inspired him to outdo his associates. His love for exploration was influenced perhaps by the travel of Samuel Hearne, who was one of the officers over him. Considering himself held back by the ultra commercialism of the Hudson's Bay Company after due time he turned to their more enterprising competitor, the Northwest Company of Merchants of Canada, with headquarters at Montreal, and became a "Northwester." As such he was chosen, after some years, to push the trade across the continental divide further south than Peace river, where Simon Fraser crossed over, and thus it fell to him to find the sources of the long looked for "River of the West" which both Alex. Mackenzie and Simon Fraser had hoped to find before him.

Let it not be supposed that the Northwest Company of Merchants of Canada were at all ignorant of the goings and comings of the Lewis and Clark party in 1805-6. Those very same years Simon Fraser (& McLeod) penetrated to the waters of

the river afterward named in his honor, and in the month of June of 1807 David Thompson descended the western slope of the Rocky Mountains by way of the pass at the head of the Saskatchewan river, which pass was afterward generously named in honor of a rival trader in the Hudson's Bay Company. The winters of 1807-8 and 1808-9 were both spent at the trading house built by him in July, 1807, on the lower of the two lakes forming the source of the main Columbia; but explorations down the Kootenay river and a journey back to Fort William to meet his partners engaged his time. In the summer of 1809 he pushed across the Indian road southward from the Kootenay to the Kullyspell (Pend d'Oreille) lake, explored both the lake and rivers below and above it, and spent that winter (1809-10) at a trading house (already mentioned) established near the Flat Head Indians of Montana; but all the time was gathering information from the Indians as to the courses of the streams flowing to the ocean, and his men were extending their trade and acquaintance with the country during his absence.

But the entries in David Thompson's journal tell of more than courage, endurance, intelligence and care; they show that he was a devout man. His common expressions "thank God" and "thank Heaven" were sincere outbursts of a spiritual nature and not mere habitual repetitions. That season of 1811 at midsummer he had an important mission to perform and unknown miles to travel, and yet on Sunday here at Kettle Falls he rested. Five years afterward he was engaged under appointment from the British Government in the important work of directing the survey and establishment of the boundary line between the United States and Canada from Maine to the Lake of the Woods. While thus engaged an associate observed and afterward remarked the following: "Mr. Thompson was a firm Churchman, while most of our men were Roman Catholics. Many a time have I seen these uneducated Canadians most attentively and thankfully listen, as they sat upon some bank of shingle, to Mr. Thompson, while he read to them in most extraordinary pronounced French three chapters out of



the Old Testament and as many out of the New, adding such explanations as seemed to him suitable."

The same individual thus describes Mr. Thompson physically: "A singular looking person of about fifty. He was plainly dressed, quiet and observant. His figure was short and compact, and his black hair was worn long all around, and cut square, as if by one stroke of the shears just above the eyebrows. His complexion was of the gardiner's ruddy brown, while the expression of his deeply furrowed features were friendly and intelligent, but his cut short nose gave him an odd look. His speech betrayed the Welchman. No living person possesses a tithe of his information respecting the Hudson's Bay countries, which from 1793 (?) to 1820 he was constantly traversing. Never mind his Bunyan-like face and cropped hair; he has a powerful mind and a singular faculty of picture-making. He can create a wilderness and people it with warring savages, or climb the Rocky Mountains with you in a snowstorm, so clearly and palpably, that only shut your eyes and you hear the crack of the rifle, or feel the snowflakes on your cheeks as he talks." This quotation is from an address delivered recently before the Royal Geographical Society of London by the eminent engineer already mentioned, Mr. J. B. Tyrrell, to whose personal research and interest the world is chiefly indebted for its growing knowledge of David Thompson.

Hurrying down the Columbia in July, 1811, David Thompson landed at a large Indian encampment near to where you are now accustomed to "keep your eye on Pasco," and erected there a pole with this written notice upon it: "Know hereby that this country is claimed by Great Britain as part of its territories, and that the Northwest Company of Merchants from Canada finding the factory of this people inconvenient to them do hereby intend to erect a factory in this place for the Commerce of the Country around."

Intelligent students of American history today candidly admit that the American diplomats did exceedingly well in finally placing the line of the Canadian boundary at the 49th

parallel of north latitude, and agree that the work of David Thompson gave a considerable degree of fairness to the British demand for that boundary to follow the line of the Columbia river south from the 49th parallel, which is the most Great Britain ever seriously claimed. And we of the Republic may well be thankful that those pesky Indians of the Saskatchewan in the early Fall of 1810 hindered David Thompson from crossing the "height of land" and thus from coming down the Columbia that year and actually occupying the mouth of the Columbia in advance of the Astor party.

During the final stages of the negotiations for the settlement of the international boundary with Great Britain, between 1842 and 1846, David Thompson, then about seventy-five years old, wrote several letters to the officials of his government emphasizing the extent and value of this wonderful Columbia river country and relating the services he had performed here. These letters are now on file in the Public Records Office at London and they are the plea of an old and forgotten man for recognition; for in sorrow he it said the last years of his life were spent in poverty and perhaps at times in distress. His death occurred at Longueuil, near Montreal, in the year 1857, during his eighty-seventh year. The families of the Merchants of Canada who had grown wealthy through the fur trade forgot him in his failing years, and the government had no time to listen to his story.

That other grand man of the Columbia, Doctor John McLoughlin, during that same year, 1857, died at Oregon City, Oregon, under similar circumstances of distress of mind. The people he had befriended became forgetful and even sought to despoil him. But during these anniversary years these men are coming to their own in the memory of the generations of the present, and these two names, David Thompson and John McLoughlin, will be placed high among all others of the early history of the Columbia river.

Ilth-koy-ape is the more appropriate and musical name for this beautiful and romantic part of this magnificent river, but the French-Canadian voyageurs and employees came to term

these Falls La Chaudiere, in recollection of similar formations in the rocks of the falls on the Ottawa river, and that name came in turn to be translated into the English meaning. The first line of direct communication, trade and travel across the continent of North America (Mexico excepted) passed up and down the Columbia river and for a period of thirty years and more was used as such, with the portage at Kettle Falls affording one of the most important supply and resting stations. We do well to honor the career and name of the man who discovered, explored, made known and opened this highway of communication, David Thompson, who loved his work and did it well, and who is proclaimed by Mr. Tyrrell as the greatest land geographer the British race has ever produced.

## SOME IMPORTANT RESULTS FROM THE EXPEDITIONS OF JOHN JACOB ASTOR TO, AND FROM THE OREGON COUNTRY\*

It sometimes happens that the indirect results of great movements are far greater and more important than the direct results intended. The intentions of the Crusaders to obtain possession of Jerusalem and to establish a permanent European government there failed, but the indirect results were the beginning of the end of feudalism and the new beginning of civilization and culture in Europe. The vanity and luxury of men and women in Europe and in China developed and made to prosper the fur-trade in North America, but the indirect results are the present developments of the Western United States and of Western and Northwestern Canada.

Capt. Robert Gray, looking for furs, when he discovered the Columbia River, May 11, 1792, and also John Jacob Astor, when he organized the Pacific Fur Company in 1810, and founded Astoria, April 12, 1811, had no thoughts of what the great indirect results would be.

In this brief address I cannot go into the details of the growth of the fur-trade in North America. I shall speak of some of its incidents.

### *Captain Cook's Last Voyage.*

Prior to 1766, Russians had established themselves in the fur-trade in what is now called Alaska, but these furs went to China, then the best market for fine furs in the world. It was the eventful third and last voyage of Capt. James Cook, which began in July, 1776, and ended in October, 1780, that the great impetus was given to securing furs in Alaska and in what was afterwards known as the "Oregon Country." This was the indirect result. The object of Cook's voyage was to ascertain whether a northwest passage, i. e., a passage between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, existed. During the

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\*Address by Frederick V. Holman, President of the Oregon Historical Society, before the Teachers' Historical Institute, at Astoria, Oregon, September 5, 1911.

times this expedition was at Vancouver's Island and Alaska the officers and sailors had obtained from the natives a quantity of furs, at trifling cost, which were used as clothing and as bedding. On the arrival of the expedition, homeward bound, at Canton, China, in 1779, what was left of these furs were sold for about two thousand pounds, sterling, a large sum of money in those days. After this expedition returned to England, the facts relating to furs on the North Pacific Coast became known and vessels, British, American and Portuguese, engaged in the trade for many years.

*The Hudson's Bay and Northwest Companies.*

The Hudson's Bay Company was granted a Royal Charter in 1670, by King Charles II., and thereafter engaged in the fur-trade in the eastern part of what was then known as British North America. In 1784 Canadian fur-traders, who had been in competition with the Hudson's Bay Company, united their interests, under the name of Northwest Company of Montreal, but usually called the "Northwest Company." The latter was composed of intelligent, forceful and resolute men and took for themselves the fur-trade in the western part of British North America, and extending to the Pacific Coast, excluding the Russian-American possessions.

June 17, 1793, Alexander Mackenzie, one of the partners of the Northwest Company, discovered a large river which he called Tacoutche-Tesse, from the name given it by the Indians. At the time of its discovery Mackenzie did not know of the Columbia River or its discovery. After his return to England and, at the time of the publication of his voyages, in 1801, and, until the exploration of this river to its mouth by Simon Fraser in 1808, it was supposed to be the upper part of the Columbia River. The Tacoutche-Tesse is now called Fraser River in honor of Simon Fraser.

In 1805 the Northwest Company sent a party to establish its first posts west of the Rocky Mountains on the Tacoutche-Tesse and in its vicinity. By the year 1806 some of these posts were established. These were the first settlements by

white men in the Oregon Country, i. e., north of latitude 42 degrees and south of 54 degrees and 40 minutes. These posts were established in what Fraser named "New Caledonia," being in the northern interior of what is now British Columbia. Undoubtedly these posts were established so early and the Fraser River explored to its mouth because of the Lewis and Clark Expedition and to forestall occupation by American fur-traders. But, in addition, along the Columbia and its tributaries, there were sure to be quantities of fur-bearing animals. Goods and supplies could be brought by sea, at least to the mouth of the Columbia, and furs shipped by the returning vessels. The discovery by Fraser that the Tacoutche-Tesse is not a part of the Columbia River merely delayed these plans of the Northwest Company.

*John Jacob Astor and His Enterprises.*

I shall not, in this address, go into the matter of John Jacob Astor and his various enterprises prior to the time he thought of engaging in the fur-trade on the Northwest Pacific Coast. At that time he had a great knowledge of the fur-trade and had become, what was then considered, a very wealthy man. He had engaged in trade with China and also in the Indian countries, west of the Mississippi River, and in Canada. The Expedition of Lewis and Clark arrived at St. Louis, Missouri, on its return, in September, 1806. Astor then learned that the Columbia River and its tributaries abounded in fur-bearing animals, including great numbers of beaver.

Prior to 1810, John Jacob Astor saw the great opportunity and elaborated a great, comprehensive scheme, which resulted in the founding of Astoria, as a part of his enterprise. His plans, in brief, were the organization of a company which he would control and furnish the capital for. It would have trading-posts on the Columbia River and its tributaries, and also on the upper Missouri. Some furs would be shipped, probably, down the Missouri to St. Louis. But most of the furs would be taken to the Columbia River and transported to a post or fort at or near its mouth. Vessels would carry goods



and supplies to the Columbia; thence they would be taken to the interior. These vessels would also furnish supplies to the Russians in Alaska and would trade with the Indians on the Northwest Pacific Coast. These vessels would then return to the Columbia to obtain supplies of furs procured there and transported from the interior. These vessels would then sail to China, sell their cargoes of furs, purchase Chinese teas and merchandise and return to New York. Thus three profits would result on each trip. Of course, there would be great risks, but probably great profits. It would require business skill and large capital to conduct the enterprises, but Astor was a man who had accumulated his fortune by his ability and by his willingness to dare and to do.

Astor obtained from the Russian government the right to trade with the Russian posts on the northwest coast of America. He obtained the moral support of President Madison and his administration to Astor's plans. At that time there was friction between the United States and Great Britain, which resulted in the war of 1812. Had President Madison had the foresight and political sagacity and courage of Thomas Jefferson, the present northern boundary line of the United States, west of the Rocky Mountains, would probably be much further north than it now is. The discovery of the Columbia by Gray; the expedition of Lewis and Clark in 1804-1806, followed by the occupation by an American Company, as proposed by Astor, and protected by the Government of the United States, would have established its rights to the country and joint-occupancy would probably never have been even thought of.

Astor endeavored to interest the Northwest Company in his undertakings, but it declined and began preparation to anticipate Astor and to secure for itself alone what he had planned for his company. As I have stated, the Northwest Company then had trading posts on the Fraser River. David Thompson, one of its partners, had discovered the headwaters of the Columbia in 1807 or 1808, and was the first white man to explore the part of that river which had not been explored by Lewis and Clark.

As I have said, Astoria was founded April 12, 1811. The Tonquin, the vessel which brought the party around Cape Horn to the Columbia River, left the river June 5, 1811, on a trading expedition to the north. Shortly afterwards she was captured by Indians at Clayoquot Sound, on the west coast of Vancouver's Island, and was totally destroyed by the explosion of her powder magazine, caused probably by one of the survivors of the massacre, when the Tonquin was captured.

July 15, 1811, David Thompson arrived at Astoria, from the upper Columbia, too late to establish a post near the mouth of that river for the Northwest Company prior to Astor's party. He had been dispatched, in 1810, for that purpose. Unforeseen difficulties had prevented his earlier arrival. The prior arrival of Astor's party was of great importance.

### *The War of 1812.*

The war of 1812 frustrated all of Astor's plans. He vainly sought to have the United States Government send a war vessel to protect Astoria or to send troops overland for the same purpose. In October, 1813, the exact day is uncertain, Duncan McDougal, acting for the Pacific Fur Company, in the absence of Wilson Price Hunt, the chief agent for Astor, treacherously sold all the property of that company to the Northwest Company. McDougal's virtue was of a kind which needed constantly to be guarded. In the Message of President Monroe, of January 25, 1823, to the House of Representatives, a copy of which, printed at Washington in 1823, I have in my library, there is set forth at length, a copy of a letter, dated New York, January 4, 1823, from John Jacob Astor to John Quincy Adams, then Secretary of State. In this letter Astor wrote:

That when Hunt returned to Astoria (February 28, 1814), "He then learnt that McDougall had transferred all my property to the Northwest Company, who were [then] in possession of it, by a sale, as he called it, for the sum of about \$58,000, of which he retained \$14,000, for wages said to be

due to some of the men. From the price obtained for the goods, &c., and he having himself become interested in the purchase, and made a partner of the Northwest Company, some idea may be formed as to this man's correctness of dealings. It will be seen, by the agreement, of which I transmit a copy, and the inventory, that he sold to the Northwest Company, 18,170 1-4 lbs. of beaver, at \$2, which was at about that time selling at Canton at \$5 and \$6; 907 otter skins, at 50 cents, or half a dollar, which were selling in Canton at 5 to \$6 per skin. I estimate the whole property to be worth nearer \$200,000, than \$40,000, about the sum I received by bills on Montreal."

Thus ended these great enterprises of John Jacob Astor.

November 30, 1813, about six weeks after this sale to the Northwest Company, the British sloop-of-war *Raccoon*, of 26 guns, commanded by Captain Black, entered the Columbia River, to capture Astoria. To the chagrin of its officers and crew, they learned that the rich booty they had intended to make their own had become the property of British subjects.

### *National Possessions of Astoria.*

December 12, 1813, Capt. Black took formal possession of the establishment and country, in the name of His Britannic Majesty, causing a British Union Jack to be run up to the top of the flag pole, at Astoria, and changing its name to Fort George. Had Capt. Black known what would be the result of his grandiloquent actions he would have hesitated, if he had not wholly refrained from attempting to take possession for his sovereign. In consequence of Capt. Black's action the claim of the United States to the Oregon Country was strengthened. It is true that this capture of Astoria was not known to the American plenipotentiaries when the treaty of peace was signed at Ghent, December 24, 1814. But on March 22, 1814, James Monroe, Secretary of State, under President Madison, knowing that Astoria might have been captured, out of excessive caution, gave the following instructions to the American Plenipotentiaries, appointed to negotiate the treaty:

"Should a treaty be concluded with Great Britain and a reciprocal restitution of territory be agreed on, you will have in mind that the United States had in their possession at the commencement of the war a post at the mouth of the River Columbia, which commanded the river, which ought to be comprised in the stipulations should the possession have been wrested from us during the war."

Henry Clay, of Kentucky, one of these plenipotentiaries, on February 7, 1838, then an United States Senator, said in a debate on Oregon in the Senate, that he himself had introduced the word "possessions" in this stipulation for mutual surrender for the express purpose of securing the restoration of Astoria, if it had been captured.

(Marshall's "Acquisition of Oregon," Part I, pages 143, 144.)

In the first article of the Treaty of Ghent it was agreed that:

"All territory, places, and possession, whatsoever, taken by either party from the other during the war, or which may be taken after the signing of this treaty, excepting only the islands hereinafter mentioned [in the Bay of Fundy] shall be restored without delay."

Without going into the diplomatic details it is sufficient to say that J. B. Prevost, an agent for the United States, was taken to Astoria in 1818, by the British frigate Blossom. October 6, 1818, Capt. Hickey, the Captain of the Blossom, and J. Heath, of the Northwest Company, as joint-commissioners on the part of Great Britain, presented to Prevost a paper declaring that, in obedience to the commands of the Prince Regent and in conformity to the first article of the treaty of Ghent, they restored to the Government of the United States, through its agent Prevost, the settlement of Fort George on the Columbia. Prevost thereupon, in return, gave these joint commissioners another paper, signed by him, which is as follows:

"I hereby acknowledge to have received, in behalf of the Government of the United States, the possession of the settlement designated above, in conformity to the first article of the Treaty of Ghent. Given under my hand, in triplicate, at Fort George (Columbia River), this 6th of October, 1818."

The British flag was then formally lowered, and that of the United States was hoisted, in its stead, over the fort or post, and the American flag was saluted by the Blossom.

(Greenhow's "History of Oregon and California" (1845 Ed.), pages 306-310.)

I cannot here discuss the legal effect of this possession surrendered by Great Britain to the United States. It gave added weight to the contentions of the United States in the final settlement of the Oregon Question.

### *The Overland Journeys of Astor Parties.*

I have purposely reserved, to this point, mention of the overland parties of the Astor expeditions to and from Astoria.

In 1810 Astor had determined to send to the mouth of the Columbia River not only a party by vessel, around Cape Horn, but also a party overland. In June, 1810, Wilson Price Hunt, one of the partners of the Pacific Fur Company, began organizing the overland party. He first went to Canada, engaged some Canadian voyageurs and trappers there, and then went, with his party, to St. Louis, Missouri, where additions were made to the party. They wintered near a small stream, called the Nadowa, a short distance above what is now St. Joseph, Missouri. April 21, 1811, Hunt and his party, left the Nadowa on their long journey. They ascended the Missouri River, by boats, to the villages of the Aricara Indians, where they arrived June 12, 1811. These villages were situated a distance of about 1,325 miles above the mouth of the Missouri. Hunt had intended to ascend the Missouri and Yellowstone Rivers, following substantially the route of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, but the great danger of attempting to pass through the country of the Blackfeet—the Ishmaelites of the Western Indians—induced him to leave the Missouri River at the Aricara villages and to travel the rest of his journey to the Columbia by land. To that end he tried to procure sufficient horses for his whole party and for the transportation of his goods and supplies. In this he was only partially successful. On the Missouri River Hunt was able to procure only 82 horses,

of which 76 were packed with goods and supplies. The whole party, consisting of 64 persons, left the Aricaras July 17, 1811. Early in August he was able to procure 36 more horses from a camp of friendly Cheyennes, which enabled Hunt to allot one horse to each two of the party, excepting those who had previously been given a horse apiece. The party arrived on the Snake River, September 26, at the abandoned Fort Henry, established by Andrew Henry, of the Missouri Fur Company, in the fall or winter of 1810, and abandoned by him in the spring of 1811. Hunt, yielding to the importunities of his party, decided to abandon his horses, make canoes and endeavor to descend the Snake River to its confluence with the Columbia. October 19, 1811, the party with its goods and supplies embarked in 15 canoes. A short time afterwards, owing to the difficulties of navigating the Snake River, they were compelled to abandon their canoes, cache their goods and most of their supplies, and endeavor to go, on foot, down the almost impassable Snake, running through a region so barren that but few Indians were able to exist there. The party was separated into two main smaller parties, going on each side of the river. I cannot here recite their privations and sufferings. One of these parties reached Astoria January 18, 1812; the other, led by Hunt, arrived at Astoria February 15, 1812. Ramsay Crooks, one of Astor's partners, and John Day arrived at Astoria May 11, 1812. A few, who had separated from their parties, did not arrive at Astoria until January, 1813.

Although the misfortunes and disasters of Hunt's main party were great, it had established that there is a feasible route overland from the Missouri River to the Snake River, south of the route of Lewis and Clark.

*The Overland Party from Astoria to St. Louis.*

After the arrival of the Astor ship Beaver at Astoria, in May, 1812, it became necessary to send a party overland to carry dispatches to Astor, at New York, giving reports of the affairs of the Pacific Fur Company, on the Pacific Coast. The party of six, under the command of Robert Stuart, left



Astoria June 30, 1812, with a larger party, who were bound for the interior posts of the Company. July 31, the Stuart party set out, from near the mouth of Walla Walla River, on its overland journey. After being robbed by the Indians of its horses and supplies and staying all winter in temporary quarters, the party arrived at St. Louis, Missouri, April 30, 1813.

The important result of this trip, by the Stuart party, is that it traveled south of the route taken by the Hunt party, in 1811, and along the Platte River, and practically discovered the Oregon Trail, or at least a large part of it. As to whether it discovered the great South Pass, by which wagons were able to cross through the Rocky Mountains, there is some question. Marshall, in his "Acquisition of Oregon," says the Stuart party discovered South Pass; Chittenden, in his work, "The American Fur Trade of the Far West," says this party passed near but did not discover it. This question is not material, for, as Chittenden wrote of the Stuart party (Vol. I., page 214):

"The route pursued on the return journey was, with three exceptions, that of the Oregon Trail of later years. Stuart's party kept south of Snake River, instead of crossing and following the line of the Boise. They also missed the line from Bear River to the Devil's Gate, although near it a good deal of the way. From Grand Island to the mouth of the Kansas they followed the rivers, instead of crossing the angle between them, as the Trail afterwards did. All of these variations from the true route would have been avoided on another journey. The two Astoria expeditions, therefore, are entitled to the credit of having practically opened up the Oregon Trail from the Missouri River at the mouth of the Kansas to the mouth of the Columbia River."

The importance of this discovery, of what became the Oregon Trail, is great. It is true it would have been discovered some time, probably by trappers or fur-traders. It appears to have been first used, after its discovery, by W. H. Ashley, of the Missouri Fur Company, with his party, in 1824. The

Stuart party, which was an Astor expedition, is entitled to the credit of the discovery of the Oregon Trail, as Capt. Robert Gray is entitled to the credit of discovering the Columbia River. It is only a question of time when the Columbia would have been discovered.

It was over this route that the Oregon immigrants traveled. It was over it that the immigrants of 1843—home-seekers—the first real Oregon immigrants, brought their wagons to The Dalles. The other Oregon immigrants up to, and including that of 1846, were a great factor in causing the settlement of the Oregon Question by the boundary treaty of 1846. The route of Lewis and Clark was impracticable for the establishment of permanent settlements in Oregon by immigrants with their wagons. The route of Hunt's party would have prevented the early settlement of Oregon, as was accomplished over the Oregon Trail.

While small parties from Canada traveled, overland to, and from Montreal and Fort Vancouver, north of the forty-ninth parallel of latitude, that route was not practicable for immigrants to use to settle the Oregon Country. But one party of immigrants came from Canada to Oregon in those early days. It left the Red River Settlement June 5, 1841, and reached Fort Vancouver about October 4, 1841. They were compelled to abandon their carts and pack their goods on oxen and other animals. This is the Canadian immigration, which the inventors of the myth that Whitman saved Oregon, largely base their fictions on as having arrived in Oregon in the fall of 1842. (Marshall's "Acquisition of Oregon," Part I, page 341.)

#### *Authorities Consulted.*

I have been compelled to write this address somewhat hurriedly, owing to other duties. I have not had time to consult many original sources. I have consulted and relied on Franck's "Narrative" (Translation of 1854), Greenhow's "History of Oregon and California" (Edition of 1845), Clittenden's "The American Fur Trade of the Far West," and Marshall's

“Acquisition of Oregon.” I have made some small use of the original journals of Bradbury and of Brackenridge. I have also been aided by some knowledge of the history of Oregon and of the Pacific Northwest, which I have acquired from a somewhat desultory study, for many years, and from reading original journals, books, pamphlets, and reports, many of which I have in my library.

*Review of Astor's Enterprises.*

In reviewing Astor's enterprises at Astoria, and in the Pacific Northwest, it must be conceded that they were conceived in sagacity, skill, boldness, and with rare business sense. The plans were admirable and, but for the war of 1812, would probably have been very successful.

The selection of Thorn as the captain of the Tonquin was most unfortunate. The destruction of the Tonquin stopped any trade on the coast until the arrival of the Beaver. It also caused the accumulation of furs at Astoria, a part of which were sold to the Northwest Company by McDougal. There is no excuse for the treachery of McDougal. The furs on hand, at the time of the sale, could have been sent easily up the Columbia to a point inaccessible to any war vessel or its officers and crew. The Indians were friendly to the Astor party. But for the war there was an opportunity to make the great profits which were made by Dr. John McLoughlin for the Hudson's Bay Company after his arrival in the Oregon Country in 1824.

It is true the Pacific Fur Company might have been forced into a commercial war with the Northwest Company, and later with the Hudson's Bay Company, after the coalescence of these two companies in 1821, but Astor's wealth and business skill should have been a match for any opposition by either of those companies. He had made his fortune in spite of opposition.

His choice of his Canadian partners was unfortunate, considering the chance of war with Great Britain, when his enterprises were inaugurated. A majority of those partners, and of the employees and servants of the Pacific Fur Company,

were British subjects. Had the majority of the partners been American citizens, especially at Astoria, there would have been no sale to the Northwest Company. It is to the credit of some of the Canadian employees that they refused to enter the service of the Northwest Company after the sale. Among these was Gabriel Franchere, whose private journal was printed, in French, at Montreal in 1820, and the English translation of it was printed in New York in 1854. This journal is simply, but charmingly written and is the first book written and printed on Settlements in Oregon. It should be read by every one desirous of obtaining information concerning early Oregon from original sources.

As to whether these Canadian partners would have remained true to Astor's interests in a contest for supremacy with the Northwest Company or with the Hudson's Bay Company, after their consolidation, that is merely a matter of conjecture. Probably they would have been true, but their exceedingly friendly treatment of the visiting parties of the Northwest Company, prior to the sale, raises a doubt. But this matter is really outside the scope of this address.

#### *Important Results from Astor's Expeditions.*

Although these enterprises of Astor's were business failures, there were certain results which were of great national importance to the United States.

Notwithstanding the discovery of the Columbia River by Gray, the time had come when the mere discovery of the mouth of a river or the exploration of the river itself, as was done by the Lewis and Clark Expedition, should be followed by some kind of actual occupation by the nation or its people who claimed by right of discovery or of exploration. This occupation, in part, at least, of the country drained by the Columbia River, was had by Astor's American Company. The loss of occupancy by the sale to the Northwest Company and by the theoretical capture of Astoria, by the Raccoon, was largely, if not more than completely, offset by the formal restoration of possession to the United States, October 6, 1818.

But the greatest result, to the benefit of the United States, was the discovery by the Stuart party of an easy and convenient way of passage from the Missouri River to the Columbia, that became the Oregon Trail, by means of which the Oregon of today was peopled by citizens of the United States, prior to the year 1847, and the Oregon Question amicably and finally settled.

Fortunately the enmity and bad feeling between the United States and Great Britain, which caused the war of 1812 and which resulted therefrom, and which nearly caused a war between them over the Oregon Question, have long since passed away and are now of historic interest only. By common consent and by mutual feeling, which are stronger and more enduring than any written treaties, these two nations and their peoples are united in a motive and in an endeavor that the genius, the traditions, and the institutions of the English-speaking peoples shall be foremost in the world.

## A HERO OF OLD ASTORIA\*

"McDonald of Oregon," is the hero of Old Astoria, the first native born Oregon traveler and explorer. It is a scant score of years since Ranald McDonald died, yet the archives of ancient chivalry are filled with crusaders such as he. The story of the American Northwest and the story of modern Japan can never be told without telling the life-story of McDonald of Oregon. Twenty years ago William Eliot Griffis, the famous writer on Japan, said: "It was McDonald who began educational activity in Japan—the story of which will some day be fully written." Hildreth, the American historian, Nitobe of Japan, and others, accord to him the highest honor; but none knew where to find McDonald, none knew he belonged to Oregon. When recently "McDonald of Oregon" fell into the hands of Dr. Griffis, he wrote forthwith to my publishers and to me, "I had hoped to tell that wonderful story, I searched America for his record, but never dreamed of looking to Oregon." But Oregon is making a mark on the literary map of the nation, her heroes, past, present and to be, will loom larger in the limelight of the future.

It is now some twenty years since the story of John McLoughlin engaged my pen. "Oh, you must see Ranald McDonald," cried the old traders and voyageurs. "McDonald knows more of the old time than anybody."

"But where shall I find this McDonald?" "Oh, over at old Fort Colville," and at Colville I found him, the strangest, most romantic and picturesque character of Northwest annals, not even excepting Dr. McLoughlin. But when I spoke of McLoughlin as "King of the Columbia," with lifted head and hand McDonald protested—"Nay, nay, *I* am the King of the Columbia." And when his story was told I was, indeed, compelled to admit that claim to kingship.

As early as 1823 Archibald McDonald came over the Can-

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\*Address by Eva Emery Dye, author of "McLoughlin and Old Oregon," "McDonald of Oregon," and "The Conquest," at Historical Institute, Astoria, Sept. 7, 1911.



adian mountains and down into Oregon to Astor's old fort, where, in process of trade, exactly as McDougal had done before him, McDonald met and married a daughter of King Cumcumly. On a Sunday morning the wedding took place, and the bride was christened the Princess Sunday. Shortly before his father left on the upbound brigade of 1824 for Canada, Ranald was born, and was already a good-sized baby when his fur-trading father returned in the autumn with Dr. McLoughlin. "How far back can I remember McLoughlin? As far back as I can remember anything," said McDonald in later years.

When McLoughlin moved his headquarters to the new Fort Vancouver little Ranald went also, and was a child of eight when in 1832 three Japanese from a castaway junk were brought to Fort Vancouver. On that incident hinged McDonald's future story. He became acquainted with the castaways, learned a few words of their language and was fired with a zeal to visit their wonderful country. Sent to Canada to be educated, and later apprenticed as a clerk in the bank of an old friend of his father, Ranald McDonald planned to run away to Japan, and did so, finding his way on a whaler to those forbidden shores. Pretending to be a castaway, in June, 1848, he was picked up by fishermen on the northern shore of Japan, and was sent to the Governor of province after province for investigation and examination. For Japan was then closed to the world, no ships were permitted in her harbors, and staring thousands followed this "ijin," this foreigner, from the "Black Ships," as passing whale ships were called. Fortunately, McDonald's Indian tint caused him to be classed as a "Nippon-jin," a Nippon-man, or Japanese. Through the entire length of the land he was carried to Nagasaki, and here, again, before the governor, he was questioned and his answers carefully written down. "Some day," says Griffis, "these records will be found in the archives of Japan." But I have McDonald's own journal and story.

When others fell face to the ground before august governors, Ranald sat bolt upright, he and the governor alone facing

each other—"He has a great heart; he must be a prince," said the Japanese. When questioned he told of his home in Oregon, that his father was a great fur trader, pointed out Astoria and the Columbia River on the map, long before Perry ever crossed the seas to "open Japan." McDonald's description of Fort Colville, and of his father's retinue of servants, confirmed them in the opinion that he came of feudal rank, "not less than a samurai of old Japan."

So genial, docile and polite was Ranald, so ready to adopt Japanese dress and manners, that he became a general favorite, and was appointed by the governor of Nagasaki to teach the English language to a class of interpreters, the first school of English ever taught in Japan. Those are the interpreters who later met Commodore Perry and assisted in drawing up the treaties with Japan. Their pictures are given in Commodore Perry's reports. Here learned men and high officials gathered around McDonald, to learn of the outer world and to ask questions about America. "And who," they inquired, "who holds the highest rank in your country?"

Ranald thought a moment and answered, "The people." "What! greater than the President!" exclaimed the astonished Japanese. "Yes, the people are greater than the President."

This story of McDonald was frequently told by Edward Everett Hale when chaplain of the Senate.

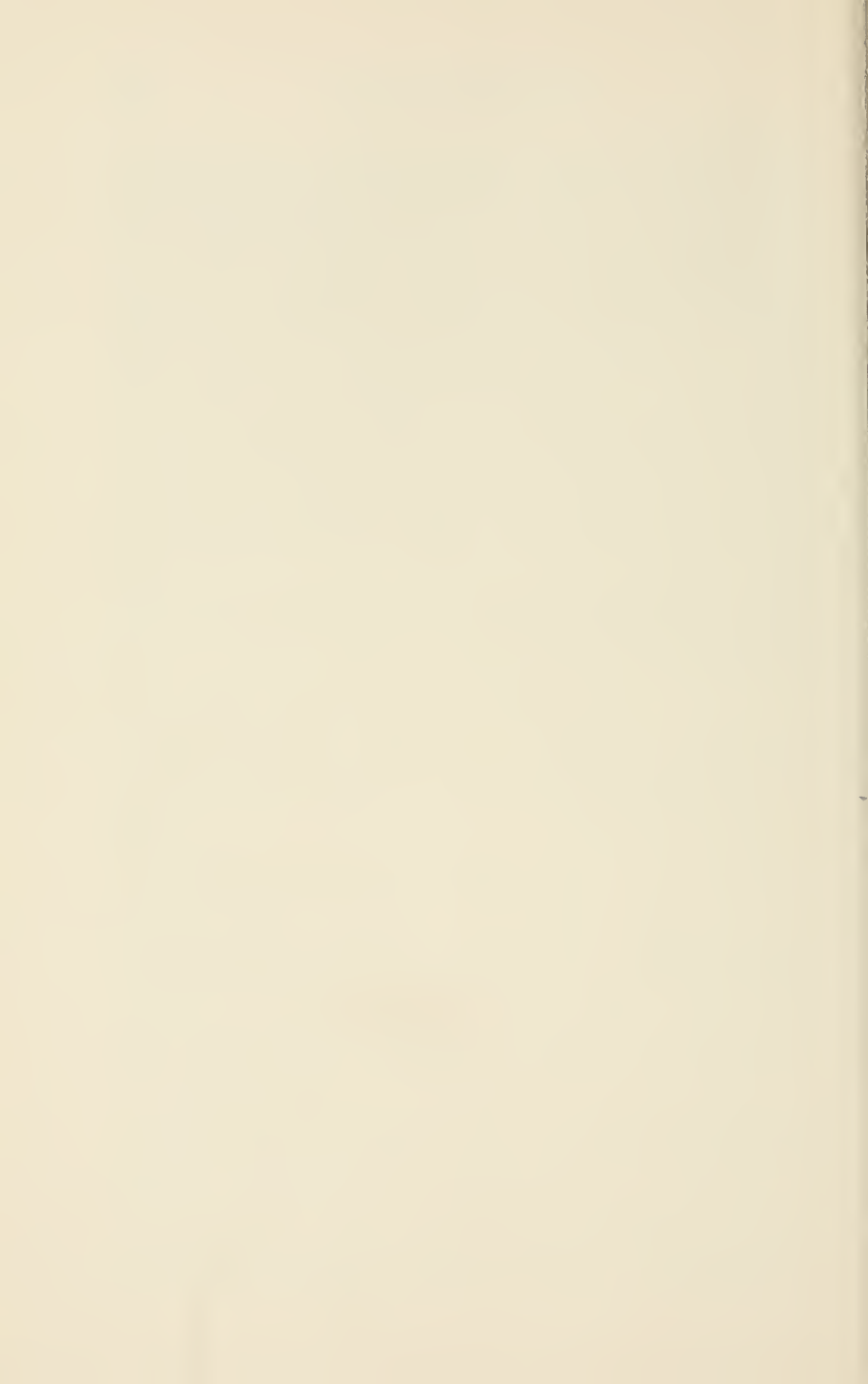
After Ranald had been in Japan nearly a year, one day he heard a signal gun, a strange ship was approaching, the United States gunboat "Preble" in search of castaway sailors known to have been stranded on that coast. For the first time Ranald learned that several Americans were immured in the dungeons of Japan for the simple crime of having been wrecked there. All the more his own good fortune appeared remarkable. With those, he, too, was liberated, although it was his earnest desire to remain among his new friends in Japan.

To Commodore Glynn of the "Preble" McDonald gave a report of his adventures. These, published in Washington in

executive document number 59 of the Thirty-second Congress, started Perry to Japan. McDonald always insisted that he opened the way for Perry, and it was his suggestion that models of western ingenuity should be taken and exhibited.

After years of adventure, Ranald McDonald returned to Oregon, to find it divided into Oregon, Washington and Idaho, and among the ruins of old Fort Colville he spent his declining years. In 1892 he made a pilgrimage to Astoria to press his claims for recompense as heir to the Chinook lands of his grandfather, King Cumcumly. But alas, he found himself, "A prince without a principality, a king without a subject." Sadly he journeyed back up the Columbia where, widely known as "Old Sir Ranald," the aristocratic old man died among his tumble-down buildings at the ripe age of seventy years, August 24, 1894.

Of all Oregonians, Ranald McDonald deserves a statue, pointing toward Japan.



THE RISE AND EARLY HISTORY OF  
POLITICAL PARTIES IN  
OREGON—IV

*By* Walter Carleton Woodward

CHAPTER VIII

## DEMOCRATIC DISCORD

The process of division in the Oregon Democracy along lines drawn by the interpretations of the Dred Scott decision had begun before the close of 1857. But the local factional differences were to overshadow the growing national schism for some months yet to come. The breach between the machine and the independent Democrats had been steadily growing wider. Revolt against the iron-clad, caucus sovereignty rule of the Clique and protest against the exploitation of the party for the personal benefit of a small coterie of politicians, were the principal bases for the attack against the Organization. At the beginning of the year 1858 it was evident that a complete split in the party was imminent.

In announcing to his readers that a movement was being launched whereby a new party was to come to light, Bush noted the fact that ever since the organization of the party in Oregon, there had been a faction, which, while adhering to the name, had never possessed the character of Democrats. "This mixed opposition have always blown the same whistle and beaten the same drum—always whining and whanging about the 'Salem Cli-que,—the 'Salem Platform,' 'hidden caucus' or 'secret cabal.' This party, whatever its name, is the same old opposition, which, like the snake, sheds its skin annually, but at the same time adds a rattle to its tail."<sup>1</sup>

The gauntlet was thrown down by nine anti-organization Democratic members of the legislature of 1857-'58, who met and called a convention of "National Democrats" to meet at Eugene, April 8, for the purpose of nominating candidates for state officers. The nine men signing the call were: Wm. M. King, Multnomah; J. H. Slater, Benton; Nathaniel Ford, Polk and Tillamook; Thos. Scott, Yamhill and Clatsop; F. A. Col-lard, Geo. Rees and S. P. Gilliland, Clackamas; Wm. Allen and A. Shuck, Yamhill.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Statesman editorial—"A New Move—The Old Snake in a New Skin." Feb. 2, 1858.

<sup>2</sup>Oregonian, Feb. 6.



"Where 'Nationalism' Tends—Are You Prepared to Go Into the Black Republican Camp?"—was the caption of an editorial in which Bush urged all Democrats to think well before they made up their mind to "leave the old Democratic flag" to join "this National-wool party—this Eugene Negro equality movement."<sup>1</sup> As a matter of fact, some of the most pronounced pro-slavery advocates were numbered among the Nationals and this editorial is an excellent example of Bush's habit of begging the question and befogging the issue, to meet his own purposes. The bitter factional feeling existing among the Democrats is illustrated by the resolutions adopted by the regular Linn county convention and introduced by Delazon Smith, the "Lion of Linn." The Nationals were referred to as "certain malcontents" and "traitors" without honest devotion to principle or sympathy with the Democratic party, who were determined to ruin where they could not rule. Therefore "we utterly repudiate and denounce the miserable, soft faction, self-styled 'National Democrats' \* \* \* We will never again admit them into our confidence as Democrats, until they shall have adopted the ancient mode of purification—washed seven times."<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand, an honest effort was made in some cases to meet the charges of Clique or boss rule, by a more adequate and practical method than that of vilification. In this connection it is exceedingly interesting to note that Clackamas county Democrats inaugurated and carried through a complete system of direct primary nominations in the spring of 1858. It was apparently as thorough an embodiment of the Direct Primary ideal as that so vigorously acclaimed in Oregon a half century later.<sup>3</sup> Naturally, this reaction against close political organ-

<sup>1</sup>Statesman, March 16.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>The plan is outlined in the following resolution: "In order to ascertain the wish of the Democratic voters of Clackamas county, fully, fairly and justly expressed, in relation to all county officers, it is recommended that every Democrat, in a meeting to be held in his precinct, proceed to vote for such nominees as he may prefer to be supported by the Democratic party of this county." Provision is made for transmitting the votes to the chairman of the county committee and for the canvassing of the vote so returned. Those persons obtaining the highest number of votes were to be declared "as the unanimous nominees of the party." Gov. Geo. L. Curry was chairman of the Convention, March 13, which inaugurated the plan. The report of the Clackamas county nominations, given in the Statesman, May 18, shows that the scheme was carried through as planned.

ization was most pronounced among the opposition. The Clatsop county Republicans declared in convention that "whoever is a loyal partisan, of whatever party, is no patriot." In accordance with this sentiment, they stated that they acknowledged no allegiance to the Republican party, further than it should adhere to its avowed principles.<sup>1</sup> The Yamhill Republicans announced that while believing in the propriety of party organization, they were diametrically opposed to any partisan usage that tended to paralyze the will of the citizens.<sup>2</sup>

The first Democratic convention for the nomination of state officers met March 16.<sup>3</sup> It reaffirmed the Kansas-Nebraska doctrine of squatter sovereignty in one resolution of its platform and in the next endorsed the Dred Scott decision "as an authoritative and binding exposition!" President Buchanan was warmly endorsed, leaving the inference that he, in his coercive, Lecompton constitution policy in Kansas was to be supported rather than Douglas, who stood out for that "Kansas-Nebraska doctrine" for which the convention so strongly declared! The famous fifth resolution adopted the year before was reaffirmed. The assembled Democrats, to add the cap sheaf to their illogical resolutions, proceeded to "hail with gratification the efforts of the Democratic Administration to initiate the construction of the Pacific Railroad" and earnestly called upon Congress to "exercise all its constitutional powers to forward the great enterprise of the age."<sup>4</sup> L. F. Grover, a member of the Salem Clique, received the nomination for Congressman, and John Whiteaker, an irreconcilable, pro-slavery man, was nominated for Governor. Bush, who had been elected from year to year by the legislature as Territorial Printer, was nominated for State Printer. This gave him his first opportunity for personal vindication at the hands of the people, in the face of the attacks made upon him as political autocrat and tyrant.

<sup>1</sup>Argus, March 20.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., March 27.

<sup>3</sup>The different party organizations nominated state tickets in the spring of 1858, so that state government could be put in operation as soon as Congress should pass an act admitting Oregon into the Union. However, members were elected as usual to the Territorial legislature at the June election at the same time that a state legislative assembly was chosen, in view of the fact that Congress might delay action in the matter.

<sup>4</sup>Statesman, March 23.

The platform adopted by the Nationals in their convention at Eugene differed but slightly from that of the Organization, on National issues. However, after endorsing the Administration of President Buchanan, the convention affirmed its belief "in the cardinal principles of popular sovereignty and in the right of the people of the Territories \* \* \* to frame and adopt their constitutions and all local laws for their own government," etc. This could easily be taken as a defense of Douglas in his break with Buchanan over the Lecompton constitution, and it was so charged by Bush.<sup>1</sup> The point of issue between the Oregon Democrats was given in the following resolution: "We reassert the great principles of the right of the represented to instruct the representative and proclaim it the bounden (duty) of the representative to obey the instructions of his constituents or resign whatever position he may at that time hold."<sup>2</sup> This was a direct contradiction of the principles of caucus rule pronounced in the notorious fifth and sixth resolutions of the Democratic platform of 1857. E. M. Barnum was named for Governor. James K. Kelly was nominated for Congressman, and at the same time a resolution was passed endorsing the record of Lane as delegate! This endorsement of Lane by the insurgent wing of the Oregon Democracy, is suggestive of his adroitness in steering clear of factional difficulties and of his continued popularity with Oregon Democrats.

Those who had been looking to the National Democrats to take issue with their opponents on national issues were disappointed. In comment upon their platform, the *Argus*, which had been accused of "honey-fugling" the Nationals, declared that not a single issue was made with the Salem dynasty upon the great question convulsing the nation, in regard to the right of the people of a Territory to adopt or reject a constitution before it should be fastened upon them by Congress.<sup>3</sup>

The schism in the Democratic party placed the Opposition (Republicans and Whigs) in a new and delicate situation.

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., April 13.

<sup>2</sup>Oregonian, April 17.

<sup>3</sup>Argus, April 17.

Republican organization which had been started aggressively in 1856, had not been followed up. The Free State Republican convention had been held early in 1857, at which time the principles of the new party had been promulgated, but no Territorial ticket had been nominated and practically no effort had been made to maintain a distinct party organization in the campaign. Dryer's attitude of semi-hostility toward the nascent party had been influential in preventing many Whigs from joining it and it still felt its weakness in numbers. The threats of the Democrats to introduce slavery if the Black Republicans should attempt to abolitionize Oregon led the timid to be conservative as to the expediency of aggressive efforts. With some Republicans, the advocacy of nobly conceived principles was the ruling motive. With others, the controlling ambition was to overthrow the Democratic machine in Oregon. The latter saw their opportunity in 1858 and were in favor of going to the assistance of the National Democrats and of further postponing active Republican organization. These conditions are illustrated in the press and in the proceedings of conventions in the spring of 1858.

In a leader, "What Has Been and What Is to Be," Adams called attention to the surprisingly large vote against slavery in November, 1857, and attributed it to fearless agitation of the subject.<sup>1</sup> And this, despite the warning of the Democrats, which "so intimidated many weak-backed Republicans that they fairly quailed before the imaginary danger of 'agitation' and some of them strongly recommended us to let the Albany convention go by default, even after the call had been published throughout the Territory." Adams accordingly exhorted Republicans to declare themselves boldly, asserting that there was but one great issue before the people; that "there is a bigger fight on hand than the present squabble between Leland<sup>2</sup> and Bush." He clearly manifested his anxiety to prevent Republicans allying themselves with the Nationals, whose principles he declared in the main to be "equally black,

<sup>1</sup>Argus, Dec. 19, 1857.

<sup>2</sup>Editor of the Democratic Standard, the organ of the "soft" or National Democrats. He was succeeded about this time by James O'Meara.

equally damnable" with those of the Clique. Perceiving that the National Democratic organization must be temporary, he urged Republicans to "put their house in order and make preparations for comfortably housing those who, after escaping from Babylon, will want a Jerusalem to flee to. Republicans never need look for many deserters from the ranks of the foe as long as they have no more comfortable quarters to invite them into than an area covered by a few slab seats under a fir tree.<sup>1</sup>

While Dryer had not yet espoused Republicanism, he was as zealous as Adams in efforts to prevent a "coalition with infamy" on the part of the "old line Whigs and all opponents of the bogus Oregon Democracy." He maintained vigorously that the quarrel among the Democrats was entirely a matter of their own, and that they should be left to fight it out in their own way.<sup>2</sup>

The proceedings of the Marion county Republican convention contain much that is suggestive of the situation in 1857-'58 from the Republican standpoint.<sup>3</sup> The preamble to the resolutions referred to "a considerable number of professed Republicans who have been and are opposed to the organization of an Oregon Republican party and who have by their influence thus far prevented any general organization." It was declared to be worse than useless to wait or hope for any advantage to be gained by the schism among the Democrats, and a thorough organization was demanded. Early in March the Yamhill Republicans declared in favor of the nomination of a state ticket and recommended that the approaching convention nominate such candidates as *can* and *will* boldly go before the people in support of Republican principles.

The Republican state convention met at Salem April 2. In the platform adopted the first several resolutions dealt with the Kansas question and denounced the pro-slavery action of the Administration. The Dred Scott decision, "which makes the Constitution a grand title instrument to every holder of

<sup>1</sup>Argus, March 6, 1858.

<sup>2</sup>Oregonian, Feb. 13, Feb. 20.

<sup>3</sup>Proceedings, in Oregonian, April 3.

slaves," was stigmatized as a disgrace to the judiciary of the Nation and a stain upon the national character. Locally, the Democratic doctrine of caucus sovereignty was repudiated as dangerous and anti-Republican. Likewise, the Viva Voce voting system, subjecting the suffrage of the citizen to the surveillance of partisan inspectors, was condemned as a relic of barbarism which found fit friends in a party whose whole organization was devoted to the extinguishment of every spark of personal freedom.<sup>1</sup> The ticket nominated was as follows: Congressman, J. R. McBride, Yamhill; Governor, John Denny, Marion; Secretary of State, Leander Holmes, Clackamas; Treasurer, E. L. Applegate, Umpqua; Printer, D. W. Craig, Clackamas, who was associated with Adams in the publication of the *Argus*.

In commenting upon the convention Dryer characterized "this Republican movement" as premature and unwise.<sup>2</sup> He charged a few men in and about Oregon City with having originated it, and with having called the convention "without the knowledge and consent of those who have a right to *advise at least* in matters of this kind. \* \* \* Now, these men will have to elect *their* ticket, if elected at all." Personal pique at being ignored by the presumptive Republican leaders, combined with a feeling of jealousy over the ascendancy of the *Argus* with the new party, is clearly recognized in Dryer's attitude. Furthermore, his name had been unsuccessfully used in the convention in the nomination of Congressman. He declared the whole movement was conceived in error by those restless minds who lacked the all important element necessary to ensure political triumph over the Salem dynasty. With three tickets in the field, each bidding for Whig support as the heir of the Whig party, the *Oregonian* entered an eloquent protest. "Do not bury us until we are dead," said the irreconcilable Whig editor. "Let *us* say when we are dead." In an editorial—"To Oregonians who Love Their Country More than Party"—he sounded the last clarion call to Whigs to hold their ground.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Proceedings in *Oregonian*, April 10.

<sup>2</sup>*Oregonian*, April 10.

<sup>3</sup>"Have the principles . . . of the Whig party ceased to exist? We think not. . . . What though the organization of the old Whig party be broken up—its principles still live. . . . Is John J. Crittenden, the gallant standard bearer, left alone? Have you all deserted him? . . . Have you denied the faith? Are you willing, do you wish to lose your political identity? Will you sell your birthright for a mess of pottage? Shame! Shame!"—*Oregonian* editorial, April 17, addressed to Whigs.



The political situation in the campaign of 1858 is confusing. For, while many issues were declared, the one real issue was—who should have the offices?<sup>1</sup> Should the Salem Clique continue to dominate Oregon politics? Hence, any attempt to explain the political alignments in the light of national issues then before the people leads to confusion. The regular Democratic ticket was referred to as the pro-slavery ticket by the enemies of the Clique. True, it was headed by Whiteaker, an avowed slavery man, and the “hards” strongly upheld Buchanan in his Kansas policy. However, in interpreting the Dred Scott decision, Bush and other leaders of the “hards” were more conservative than some of the opposition Democrats, represented by the Occidental Messenger, which held that even a state did not have the right to keep slavery out of its borders. In fact, the members of the Clique were understood to be free state men. Nevertheless, the “hards” applied indiscriminately the epithet “Black Republican” to the “soft” Democrats. Both free state and pro-slavery Democrats were found co-operating with the maligned “freedom shriekers” for the purpose of beating the Organization. Bush charged the Messenger or “Avery’s Ox,” with being as silent as death on the subject of slavery and Black Republicans during the campaign, for the reason that Avery was running for office and wanted Republican support. But he showed that after the election the latter again took up the cause of slavery and restored the prefix “Black” to his erstwhile friends, the Republicans.<sup>2</sup>

But Bush certainly had very little ground for charging anyone with inconsistency in this campaign. He was at heart, and had been openly, an enthusiastic supporter of Douglas and his policies. But with the break between Douglas and Buchanan, the Oregon Democracy espoused the latter and political patronage, as illustrated in the platform adopted. Bush, wishing to retain the lucrative job of public printer, quietly accepted the Buchanan, Lecompton platform and had no word

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<sup>1</sup>M. P. Deady, correspondence to San Francisco Bulletin, dated April 20, 1864.

<sup>2</sup>Statesman, June 29.

to say in defense of his friend Douglas during the campaign. It was in reference to this campaign that Delazon Smith, in speaking later of Bush, said he "packed the dumb dog over the state and barked for him because he couldn't bark for himself."<sup>1</sup> Bush had praised the state platform unstintedly, declaring that there was not a word too much or too little in it and that the confidence expressed in the wisdom and integrity of Buchanan was fully merited.<sup>2</sup>

Lane, alarmed at the prospect of Democratic discord in Oregon and at its probable relations to his political fortunes, made plain what he considered the paramount issue to be. In an open letter to the Statesman,<sup>3</sup> he said: "Fellow Democrats of Oregon, division in the Democratic party will not do. \* \* \* Shall Oregon come into the Union under the auspices of a sectional organization or shall she come in to strengthen the hands of the Constitution and the Union? \* \* \* All Democrats should bear in mind that the Democratic party is the Union." He appealed to the Democracy to bury all private animosities and sacrifice ill feelings and heart burnings on the altar of the public good and to unite as one man in support of the regular nominees.

On May 21, preceding the June election, the Republican candidates for Congressman, Governor and Secretary of State publicly withdrew from the race, leaving the contest to be settled between the "hard" and "soft" factions of the Democrats. The majority of the counties had put out Republican tickets and adopted aggressive platforms. But Holmes, one of the retiring candidates, complained that too many Republicans counted their work done when the nominations were made. The candidates, in their withdrawal, said the organization for the campaign was incomplete and defective and not calculated to inspire success. Hence they thought better to retire than to make a poor showing of Republican strength,

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<sup>1</sup>"Delazon barked against Douglas, barked for Buchanan and barked for Lecompton and Dred Scott, giving an opportunity at the close of his speech for his 'candidate' to get down, wiggle his tail and whine an endorsement of what had been said, which he always did with relish."—Argus, Dec. 27, '62.

<sup>2</sup>Statesman, March 23.

<sup>3</sup>Quoted in Oregonian, May 1.

waiting to draw the issue at a more propitious time. The *Argus* deprecated their action but made the best of it, asserting that every Republican agreed that thereafter the Republican ticket must be adhered to in full every year until victory should be achieved.<sup>1</sup>

The inevitable result was a more or less complete coalition between the Republicans and the National Democrats. The *Argus* of June 5 made the statement that in Clackamas and Yamhill counties the National Democratic candidates repudiated their own platform, accepting that of the Republicans. In a few counties, the Republican organization was kept intact and the three tickets were voted upon. As far as observable, in those counties where the "hards" lost, it was the "softs" which won. Washington county, which elected a Republican ticket, was an exception. Republican organization had for the time largely disintegrated in the face of the general desire to help overthrow Bush and the Salem Clique.

The election was a victory of organization over disorganization, the "hards" winning by very comfortable margins. But while Grover was elected Congressman by a majority of 1,669 and Whiteaker Governor by 1,138, Bush was victor over his nearest competitor, James O'Meara, by a bare 400 votes. The combined opposition secured the election of eleven members of the state legislature. The strongholds of the Opposition proved to be in Benton, Multnomah, Douglas and Yamhill counties.

Following the election, Adams made some very plain statements in a leader—"To the Republicans of Oregon."<sup>2</sup> Beginning with, "You now see that this election, like all that have preceded it, has been a perfect failure," he pointed out that the Republican party, instead of having consolidated itself by a thorough organization in every county, had lost ground. This, by listening to the counsels of "old pitchers in" who had long been "beating the Clique" whenever they saw a good opening to slip themselves into office between two factions.

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<sup>1</sup>*Argus*, May 22.

"We have seen enough of the rottenness and recklessness of demagogues in this campaign to satisfy us that the most deadly hostility to the Republican party may be looked for hereafter from adventurers, who, while they are terrible on the Clique, are determined that any opposition to it shall be so shaped as to secure their own personal preferment. \* \* \* We trust the friends of sound principles will hereafter listen to no proposals for a 'Clique-beating party' upon a rotten platform. If we are beaten, let us be honorably beaten." A good share of this was evidently intended for Dryer who had opposed Republican organization and who had secured election to the legislature. Early in the campaign the Oregonian had attacked Adams viciously as a self-confessed dictator who had put out the Republican state ticket on his own responsibility.<sup>1</sup>

The Constitution which had been adopted provided that the newly-elected state legislature should convene on the first Monday in July, and proceed to elect two United States Senators and make such further provision as should be necessary to the complete organization of the state government.<sup>2</sup> Accordingly, the legislature met July 5 and elected Lane and Delazon Smith as Oregon's first senators. Lane received 46 votes, every "National" Democratic member joining their enemies, the "hards," in supporting him. Smith received 39 votes, the strength of the Organization in the assembly. Five of the seven "soft" members joined the three Republican members in voting for David Logan, against Smith.<sup>3</sup> A few acts were passed which were not to become operative until Congress should admit Oregon into the Union.

Shortly before this special session of the legislative assembly, the United States Senate had passed the bill for the admission of the state of Oregon. Lane, in writing from Washington to Bush in the interest of his candidacy for the senate, announced the Senate's action and indicated clearly that there was no question at all of the passage of the bill in the house. But Congress adjourned without conferring statehood upon

<sup>1</sup>Oregonian, April 24.

<sup>2</sup>Article 18, section 6, Constitution of Oregon.

<sup>3</sup>Proceedings, in Argus, July 17.

Oregon. The fact soon became known that Lane had done practically nothing toward securing favorable action in the house. No satisfactory explanation of his strange attitude could be had. Oregon Democracy was surprised, disappointed and chagrined. Popular adulation of the idolized leader, who had just been honored by Democracy's unanimous vote for United States Senator, began to give way to doubt and suspicion. His attitude was attributed to ulterior motives.

It has been pointed out that the relations between Lane and the Clique had never been cordial.<sup>1</sup> Especially was this true between Lane and Bush, as the private correspondence between the various leaders clearly shows.<sup>2</sup> But a public break between them did not take place until in December, 1858. In a long editorial, "Why the State was not Admitted," Bush attacked Lane for his inaction, intimating that Lane, fearing he might not be elected Senator, was not anxious to have the Territorial government superseded, under which he had an unexpired term to fill out as delegate. He declared that there was no room for doubt that Oregon's delegate had proven unfaithful and false to his trust.<sup>3</sup> From this time on the Statesman bitterly attacked Lane.<sup>4</sup> And as Delazon Smith, who, with Congressman-elect Grover, had gone on to Washington, took sides with his colleague, he came in with Lane for a full share of abuse. Contributed articles in the Statesman indicate that the feeling against Lane was general and that the Democrats were losing faith in his devotion to the interests of Oregon as above his own personal interests.

The difficulties of the Oregon Democracy in 1858 in finding and maintaining a status, in harmony with conditions at Washington, demand more than the passing notice already given. The Democratic policy was to evade expression on any issue

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<sup>1</sup>Supra, pages 81 82, 142.

<sup>2</sup>"Lane didn't get anything allowed me for that 2nd volume of statutes—says Black Republicans prevented him. Likely, I reckon he thinks it best to keep that suspended over my head to 'hold the wretch in order.' Well, let it hang. 'Who's afeard'?"—Letter, Bush to Deady, Oct. 11, 1856.

<sup>3</sup>Statesman, Dec. 21.

<sup>4</sup>The Democratic Crisis, Feb. 9, 1859 attributed Bush's sudden attack on Lane to the fact that the latter did not secure the passage of a bill introduced in Congress for the relief of Bush to the extent of \$6000 for printing the statutes of Oregon.

which might threaten the unity and harmony of the party organization. It has been seen how such unity was endangered by the rise of the slavery question in Oregon and by the Dred Scott decision. Further trouble was encountered in the attempt to maintain harmony in the face of the disagreement between President Buchanan and Douglas over the Lecompton constitution in Kansas. The reflection of this controversy is first found in Oregon in January, 1858.<sup>1</sup> In February Bush expressed his opinion privately in favor of Douglas' position.<sup>2</sup> Publicly, he approached the question very gingerly and in the *Statesman* did his best to belittle and smooth away the apparent discord between the two national Democratic leaders. "There is no difference between the President and Mr. Douglas in matter of any vital principle involved," he declared.<sup>3</sup> After epitomizing Buchanan's contentions, he said, "Mr. Douglas denies all these conclusions and raises issues of fact tending to vitiate their basis." This was as near as Bush came in 1858 to supporting Douglas with whom he was in sympathy. Having summed up the situation diplomatically, he added the words of paternal admonition, "We cannot encourage our (Oregon) Democracy to turn much attention to this subject until it shall assume more tangible shape or involve some more important principle."

The Linn county Democrats, whose declarations in conventions were generally those of the Democratic orator and leader, Delazon Smith, asserted that the Kansas difficulty could never rise to the dignity of a national issue; that they regarded the difference of opinion between President Buchanan and Senator Douglas as "both honest and courteous"; that "members of the Democratic party may everywhere differ in opinion to

<sup>1</sup>"Jo Lane's Times which had just committed itself and the Oregon Democracy to the Douglas and Walker horn of the Kansas swindle, has changed its coat since Jo Lane has sent in his instructions, and came out last Saturday with a flaming endorsement of Buchanan's plan of subjugating Kansas, although it still contends that the Constitution should have been submitted to the people of Kansas."—*Argus*, Jan. 30.

<sup>2</sup>"As to the position of Buchanan and Douglas they are both right in one sense. I think Douglas' position is undeniably correct. . . . But the conduct of the free state men in Kansas, in refusing to vote for delegates to the Constitutional Convention, leaves them without much right to complain and I am not certain but that I would vote for the Lecompton Constitution if I was in Congress."—Letter, Bush to Deady, Feb. 12, 1858.

<sup>3</sup>*Statesman*, March 2.



the same extent and upon the same subject, without impairing their standing as Democrats."<sup>1</sup> But by the time the state convention assembled, the prestige of the Administration made itself felt, with the result of the aforementioned endorsement of Buchanan and his policies. As the campaign progressed the support of President Buchanan became more and more cordial and pronounced. Douglas was completely deserted. The Lane county Democrats, not content with a general hearty endorsement of the administration of "our present patriotic and distinguished Chief Magistrate," singled out for special commendation, "that policy pertaining to the admission of Kansas."

But before the end of the year Oregon Democracy began to experience a change of heart. Dryer wrote from Salem in December, when the last Territorial legislature was in session, that those who had been loudest in denouncing Douglas and lauding Buchanan were now pronouncing eulogies upon the former and "cursing both loud and deep Old Buck as a humbug and knave." He attributed the sudden conversion solely and entirely to the Illinois election, which had "produced a change almost equal to that of Pentecost." Dryer proceeded with a picturesque characterization of the Oregon Democracy<sup>2</sup> and also predicted the open break between Bush and Lane which occurred that very month.

Though a state constitution had been adopted, state officers elected, a state legislature held, United States Senators chosen and the new Governor inaugurated, Oregon remained a Territory. Lane advised the people of Oregon to proceed under the auspices of the state government just as though Congress had admitted the Territory as a state. He recommended the holding of the regular session of the state legislature in September in accordance with the schedule of the Constitution. Such semi-defiant procedure was vigorously opposed by the Statesman. The assembly-elect followed the lead of Bush

<sup>1</sup>Proceedings, in Statesman, March 16.

<sup>2</sup>"Democracy in Oregon means devotion to the personal interests of Asahel Bush. . . . It means that you must relish the egotism as well as the Toryism of D—y [Deady] and commend the recreancy of B—E [Boise] the Massachusetts Whig and laugh immoderately at the obscenity of "Nes" [Nesmith] and down on your belly at their bidding where you must crawl, meekly looking up and eating any quantity of dirt that is set before you."—Oregonian, Dec. 18.

and the September session was not held, though an abortive attempt was made to organize the session, on the part of the Opposition members.

Hence, the Territorial legislature which had been elected in June as a precautionary measure, at the same time that the state assembly was elected, was called to meet in December. The same question relative to the protection of slave property, that had embroiled the session of the preceding year, was now again introduced. A comparison of the discussions of the two sessions is interesting as showing the advanced ground which had been taken by certain Democrats in the interim relative to the rights of slavery in the Territories.

The "petitions of several citizens of Oregon praying for the passage of a law for the protection of slave property in Oregon"<sup>1</sup> were referred to the judiciary committee of the house. The majority report, signed by W. W. Chapman, chairman, and W. G. T'Vault, held that the Constitution guaranteed equal rights to all property holders in the Territories, including slave owners. And further, that "when Congress does organize a Territorial government that the Constitution guarantees to the inhabitants the right to legislate, and regulate the manner how any person shall have his property protected."<sup>2</sup> Hence the committee introduced a bill containing the following provisions: First, that those who had brought slaves into the Territory, should have all the rights and remedies in the several courts of the Territory, which were allowed for the protection and recovery of any other personal property of like value. Second, that those knowingly harboring or employing a slave without consent of the owner should be subject to a forfeit of five dollars per day to the owner. Third, that slaves should be rated and assessed to owners like any other property. Fourth, that any master or owner of a boat carrying a slave out of the Territory or to any point in the Territory without the consent of the owner, should forfeit the value of the same to the latter.

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<sup>1</sup>Proceedings, Oregonian, Jan. 22, 1859.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., Jan. 15.

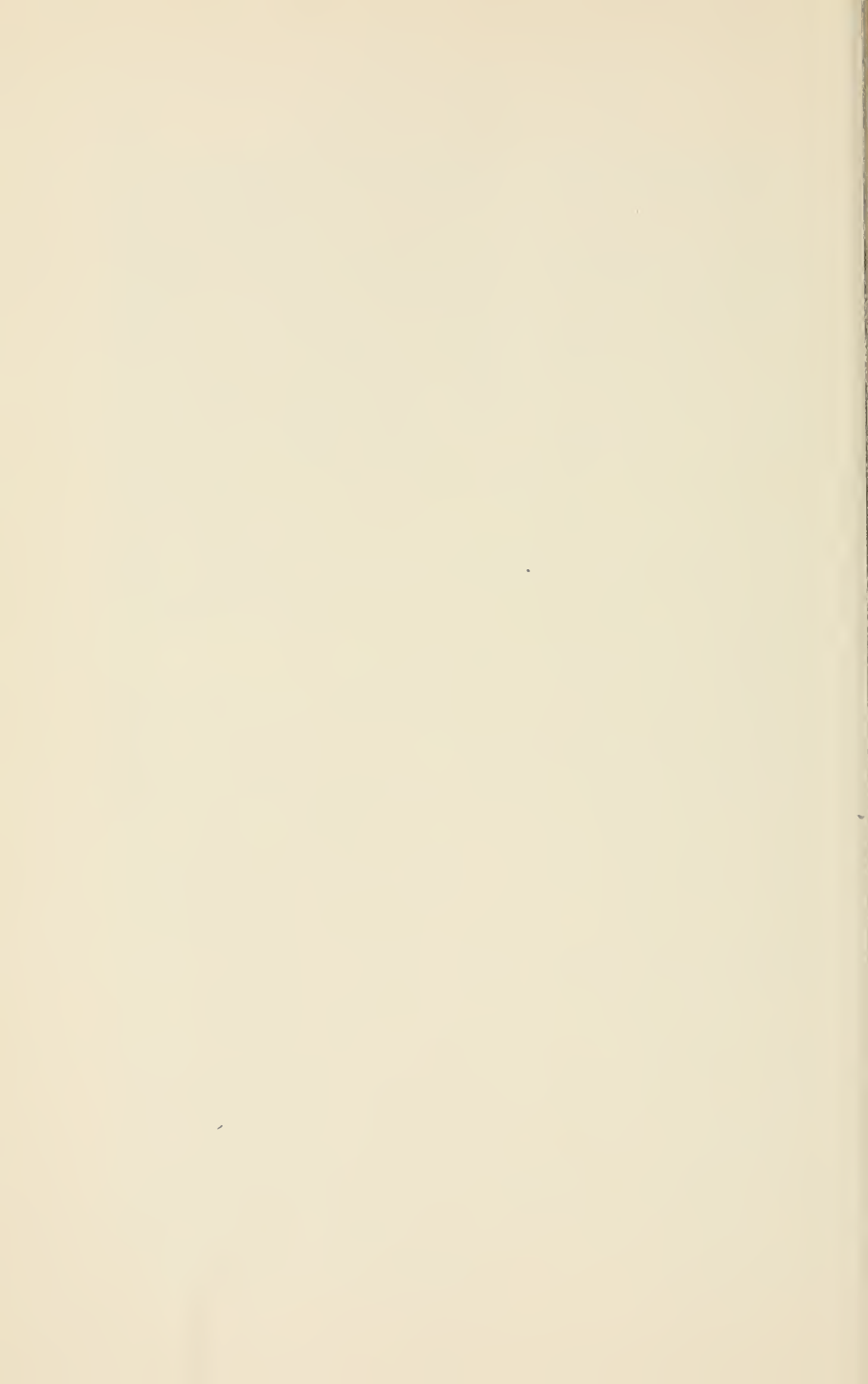
Two minority reports were returned from the committee. One was by N. H. Cranor of Marion, who had taken an important part in the discussion on the same question a year previous, at which time he had held that slavery was excluded from Oregon by the act of Congress organizing the Territory.<sup>1</sup> Now, he held that as the Territories were property of the General Government, the citizens of all sections had equal rights therein; that neither Congress nor the Territories, under the Dred Scott decision, had power to legislate upon the question of slavery in the Territories. Hence, the legislation petitioned for was impossible and was also useless, as by the decision of the Supreme Court, slavery was already protected in the Territories and needed no special legislation. One year before, Cranor had taken just the opposite position. He presents a good example of the rapid intellectual development of good Democrats whose chief object was to adjust their ideas to the constitutional doctrine of the Administration.

The other minority report was presented by E. D. Shattuck, a Republican, representing Washington and Multnomah. He reviewed at length the Republican doctrine on the question, declaring that that part of the Scott decision affecting the question at issue was gratuitous and had not the force of law; that under its organic act, the Territorial legislature had power to legislate upon the subject in the negative only. In short, Cranor held that a Territorial legislature could take no action; Chapman and T'Vault that it could take action, but only affirmatively; Shattuck that it could take action, but only negatively.

Action was not taken upon the majority report until near midnight of the last day of the session, when, with a small attendance present, it was adopted by a vote of 13 to 9. This was the action of the house only, and of course the negro bill introduced was abortive. However, it is an interesting fact that such a bill was actually introduced and rather heartily supported. And that too, after the people of Oregon, in accordance with the Democratic doctrine of popular sovereignty, had decided against slavery by a vote approximatey five to one.

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<sup>1</sup>Supra, page 161.



PART III

THE PERIOD OF STATE GOVERNMENT—  
CIVIL WAR PERIOD

CHAPTER IX

*Political Maneuvering in 1859*





## CHAPTER XI

### POLITICAL MANEUVERING IN 1859

The statement has been made that no state, not of the original thirteen, has contributed so materially as Oregon in the circumstances of its acquisition and territorial organization to the great national issues which have divided the country.<sup>1</sup> Whether the statement is literally true or not, it forcefully suggests what is apt generally to be overlooked—the close, vital relation of isolated Oregon to the great issues which have stirred the whole nation. It is not the purpose here to dwell upon this interesting phase, further than to suggest the relation of the admission of Oregon—as a Territory in 1848 and as a state in 1859—to the development of the national issue of slavery.

In 1848 the organization of the Territory had been opposed by the pro-slavery element in Congress. In the struggle over the Oregon bill, occasioned by the anti-slavery provision, Calhoun laid down the principles which were thereafter to be maintained by the South and on which the policy of the National Democracy was to be based. He declared that the territories were the common property of the people of the United States and that as a result the South was entitled to the same property rights therein as the North. Ten years later Oregon was knocking for admission to the Union as a free state. This time the opposition arose from the anti-slavery element in Congress, the Oregon bill being championed by the regular Democratic organization. In the first place it was not considered strictly a party question. In 1857 the lower house of Congress had passed an act authorizing the people of Oregon to organize a state government, but Congress adjourned before action was taken by the Senate. In May, 1858, the Senate passed a bill by a vote of 35 to 17 to admit Oregon, with the constitution which had in the meantime been adopted. Eleven Republican senators were among the 35 and six among the 17.

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<sup>1</sup>Hon. Frederick N. Judson, St. Louis, Mo., in anniversary address commemorating admission of Oregon to the Union. See Proceedings, p. 33.

Among the minority were some of the radical Southern senators including Jefferson Davis, who were opposed to the admission of any more northern states. The leader of the eleven Republicans who favored admission was Wm. H. Seward.<sup>1</sup> As has been suggested, the first session of this the 35th Congress came to a close without action having been taken by the lower house.<sup>2</sup>

The action of the rabid, pro-slavery Southern senators in opposing the admission bill, made it plain that the Administration Democrats could not command the full party vote in support of the bill. The Republicans, whose numbers had been steadily increasing in Congress and who were anxious to make their influence felt, now found in the Oregon question the eagerly awaited opportunity to exhibit their party strength. Various reasons for their opposition to the admission bill were publicly stated by the Republicans. Oregon's population was not sufficient to entitle her to statehood. The same requirements should be made of Oregon which had been prescribed for Kansas. Some criticism of the constitution was indulged in. But these were not the real sources of opposition. Oregon gave promise of being a Democratic state—had in fact already elected Democratic senators and congressman—and her admission would materially increase the strength of that party in Congress. It was, moreover, already conceded that the approaching presidential election would be closely contested and Oregon might turn the scale the wrong way—from the Republican viewpoint. The sincerity of the people of Oregon in adopting a free-state constitution under which discrimination was made against free Negroes, and furthermore in electing a recognized pro-slavery advocate in Lane to the Senate, was questioned. The strength of the pro-slavery element in Oregon was known and feared. Furthermore, there was a desire on the part of the Republicans to retaliate upon the

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<sup>1</sup>Franklin P. Rice, "Eli Thayer and the Admission of Oregon" in the Worcester (Mass.) Magazine for February and March, 1906, republished in "Proceedings of the 50th Anniversary of the Admission of the State of Oregon to the Union." Mr. Rice gives a concise, lucid account of the situation, based upon the records of Congress and the newspapers of the period, and his account has here been closely followed.

<sup>2</sup>*Supra*, page

Democrats for their refusal to admit Kansas. Influenced by these various motives, the Republican organization in Congress, encouraged by such prominent Republicans as Horace Greeley, determined to test its strength against the Administration forces by opposing the Oregon bill.

Accordingly, when, in January, of the second session of this Congress, the bill for the admission of Oregon was reported in the house, the Republican policy of opposition was declared. But when the party managers undertook to rally the full Republican strength against the bill,—they encountered serious defection in the ranks. Fifteen Republicans, led by Eli Thayer of Massachusetts, refused to regard the Oregon bill as a party measure, which it had really now become. The most strenuous efforts were made to enforce party discipline upon them but in vain. Viewing the question upon its own merits, they declared that the people of Oregon had proceeded in accordance with the accustomed usages, had acted in good faith and were entitled to statehood. Hence they voted for the bill, with the Administration forces, as opposed to the Republican organization and the Southern extremists. On February 12, 1859, the house passed the bill by a vote of 114 to 108 and two days later the President affixed his signature. Oregon was at last a state and the eager hopes of a decade were realized.

The passage of the admission bill seemed to reinstate Lane partially with Oregon Democrats, though not with Bush and the Clique with whom the break was irrevocable. The general attitude toward Lane is reflected in the actions of the county Democratic conventions held in the spring of 1859. The Polk county Democrats declared that they would not aid in building up a personal party for any man, no matter what his present position and future prospects might be. They demanded a strict adherence to the doctrine of rotation in office.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, the Clackamas Democrats viewed "with pride and renewed confidence the continuous and untiring zeal of our fellow-citizen, the Hon. Jos. Lane, in his efforts to secure the highest good of Oregon and we believe that but for his per-

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<sup>1</sup>Statesman, April 12, 1859.

sonal efforts in our behalf, Oregon would now be in Territorial vassalage." In harmony with this resolution, the Statesman was condemned for its assaults upon distinguished members of the Democratic party.<sup>1</sup> Similar action supporting Lane was taken by Josephine, Multnomah and Linn county, though in some cases by a bare majority vote.<sup>2</sup>

The break between Lane and the Clique gave the Nationals or "soft" faction of the party their opportunity. As has been shown, they remained steadfast in their loyalty to Lane and they now began to rally round him as their champion against the Clique. The leadership of Lane gave them that political legitimacy which was so essential. They were no longer political pariahs. In fact they began looking forward at once to securing, through the prestige of Lane, the control of the regular party machinery. The return of the Nationals to the regular organization was hailed with satisfaction by several county conventions and by the following resolution adopted by the state convention: "We approve and rejoice over that thorough and harmonious unison of the party which has displaced past differences and given assurances of future united action." As the Nationals were in control of the convention, however, the "approval" was easily understood and there was a lurking suspicion of irony in the reference to the harmonious unison of the party.

The Democratic state convention met on April 20 at Salem. It was the first convention in which the Lane forces and the Clique had been in open opposition. A trial of strength was at once made and the Clique was worsted for the first time. A minority of the committee on resolutions dissented from the report. Thirty votes were cast against the fifth resolution which strongly commended the three Oregon representatives in Congress for their effective work in securing the admission of Oregon.<sup>3</sup> The real test of strength, however, came in the vote for nomination of a Congressman to succeed Grover. Lansing

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., April 19.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., April 19, April 26.

<sup>3</sup>Proceedings, Statesman, April 26.

Stout, a young Portland attorney who had recently come from California, was nominated by the Lane-Smith faction. Grover, a member of the Clique, was supported by the old organization for renomination. Stout was nominated by a vote of 40 to 33. As to the methods by which this result was achieved, charges and recriminations were many and bitter. Bush charged that Linn county promised to vote for Grover if Marion county would pledge itself to vote for the re-election of Delazon Smith as United States Senator. This was refused, whereupon the opposition to the Clique joined forces in a secret caucus where successful plans for the defeat of Grover were matured. Bush declared that the latter was sacrificed because he had chosen to devote his time and influence at Washington to the interests of his constituents and country rather than to the perpetuation of Gen. Lane in office.<sup>1</sup>

The attitude of the old organization leaders on seeing their factional enemies step in and at once secure control of the party organization may be easily imagined. Bush was furious and made it plain in the *Statesman* that little help might be expected from him in the campaign. Other members of the Clique were equally irreconcilable.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, the Nationals were correspondingly jubilant. The expression of the Oregon Weekly Union of Corvallis, edited by Jas. H. Slater, a National, may be regarded as typical of the attitude of the "softs". In reviewing the proceedings of the convention,<sup>3</sup> Slater announced that in the repudiation of the old fifth and sixth resolutions, the principles contended for by the National Democrats were thus triumphant even in the old organization. Believing that a return to correct principles had been effected; that caucus sovereignty had been abandoned and repudiated; that censorship of the Democratic press was not to be continued; that effect was to be given to the voice of the

<sup>1</sup>Editorials in *Statesman*, April 26, on "Democratic State Convention" and "The Personal Party."

<sup>2</sup>"You have doubtless heard of the damnable outrage perpetrated by Lane and Smith's friends in our mis-called Democratic Convention." (Details given.) "This is a remarkable triumph of caucus sovereignty! I boldly denounced the 'dirty bargain' in the Convention—laid the thing open to public gaze—exposed Stout's Know Nothingism in California."—Nesmith to Deady, April 25.

<sup>3</sup>Oregon Weekly Union, April 23.

masses in preference to the dicta of a few who had usurped authority, Slater pledged his best efforts to the support of the ticket.

Early in the spring the Republicans began organizing with a new determination to establish a permanent and independent party, free from all connection with Democratic factions. As an illustration of what was taking place over the state, a city mass meeting was held at Portland, March 5, "for the purpose of organizing a party which shall be opposed to the present (so-called) Democratic party of Oregon." The resolutions adopted called for the thorough organization of the National Republican party in Oregon; utterly repudiated the doctrines of abolitionism and denied that it constituted any part of the Republican creed; declared unreservedly for the full and free application to the Territories of the doctrine of popular sovereignty.<sup>1</sup> This last resolution indicates the heresy of Oregon Republicanism on the great issue of squatter sovereignty, further evidence of which was to be frequently given.

Among those addressing the meeting was Dryer. In the next issue of the *Oregonian* he strongly endorsed the meeting and from this time may be considered a Republican. In the spring of 1858 he had denounced the idea of political organization of the opposition as likely to prove as baneful as that of the Salem Clique. But in December he had turned squarely about and urged the necessity of the organization of a political party by the *People of Oregon* as the only remedy for the existing evils under Clique rule.<sup>2</sup> In February, 1859, he referred to the call—made by "W. T. Matlock and four other residents of Clackamas county calling themselves a 'Republican Central Committee'"—for a state convention to be held at Salem, April 21. He could not withhold some insinuations as to the presumption of a few Clackamas county politicians, self-constituted as leaders, but concluded with expressing the hope that the convention would prove successful in organizing the forces against the ruling dynasty.<sup>3</sup> All of which indicated that Dryer was "coming

<sup>1</sup>*Oregonian*, March 12.

<sup>2</sup>*Oregonian*, Dec. 4, 1858.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, Feb. 5, 1859.



round" gradually. A little later in a leader, "The Republicans!" he speaks of the aggressive work of the Republicans in the several counties, which he gives guarded commendation, and tacitly joins his fortunes with the new party.<sup>1</sup> Thus, after holding aloof for three years, the old Whig veteran now brought the Oregonian to the aid of the Republican cause.

The Republican state convention met at Salem on the day following the meeting of the Democrats. The Republicans proceeded with a seriousness of purpose, with a practical determination to achieve results as well as to declare high sounding principles, which had not before characterized them. They now acted as members of a political organization rather than as a mere assembly of reform enthusiasts and political doctrinaires. The resolutions adopted, written by such men as J. R. McBride, T. W. Davenport and Jesse Applegate, were sane, conservative and even conciliating.<sup>2</sup> The strongest devotion to the Union was avowed and anything approaching hatred of any part of it was as strongly disavowed. While announcing unalterable opposition to slavery extension, the right to interfere with institutions existing in the states, was disclaimed. A guarded declaration was made in favor of popular sovereignty, which, though not in accordance with orthodox Republicanism, would tend to mollify aggressive Westerners and would clearly strengthen the party in Oregon. Intervention of Congress for the protection of slavery in the Territories, demanded by leading Democrats, was severely denounced. While declaring for the purity of the ballot box, a welcome was extended to those foreigners who preferred free institutions to despotism. The belief was expressed that the enforcement of the existing naturalization laws was all that was necessary as a barrier against foreign immigration. This set the Republicans clear on the subject of Know Nothingism. The annexation of adjacent territory was favored, by fair and honorable means, with the consent of the governed. The resolutions further declared for a homestead bill, the construction

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., Feb. 26.

<sup>2</sup>Proceedings in Statesman, April 26 and in Argus, April 30.

of the Pacific railroad, internal improvements and for a tariff upon imports to meet the current expenses of the government, which should discriminate in favor of home industry. The immediate payment of the Oregon Indian war debt was urged upon Congress.

David Logan was nominated for Congress with 32 votes, his nearest competitor being B. J. Pengra of Eugene, editor of a new Republican paper, the People's Press. Dr. W. Warren, Leander Holmes and A. G. Hovey were chosen as delegates to the National Republican convention of 1860, and were instructed to use their influence for W. H. Seward.<sup>1</sup> H. W. Corbett, W. C. Johnson and E. D. Shattuck were elected as a state central committee.

Bush, enraged and disgusted over the results of the Democratic Convention, gave the Republicans unwonted consideration. He stated that Logan was well known throughout the state and was the strongest man that could have been named; that there were some good things in the platform and some "colored" things; but that it was unexpectedly decent to come from such a body as the convention was.<sup>2</sup> In fact, after a week for reflection, Bush began to find fault with the Republican platform because it *was* so mild and inoffensive. He pointed out at once the singular incongruity between the platform and candidate for Congress on the one hand, and the Seward instructions on the other. He said that the platform had no Seward Republicanism in it and that Logan's slavery opinions no more accorded with Seward's than with Garrison's. The opinion was expressed that the platform was three-fourths humbug; that neither it nor the candidate even approached the eastern standard of black Republicanism. Nor did they

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<sup>1</sup>The Seward instructions were slipped through rather surreptitiously near the close of the Convention by Pengra, after many delegates had left. See *Argus*, Oct. 29, 1859.

<sup>2</sup>*Statesman*, April 26.

"Logan was nominated by the blacks and Jesse made the best platform that could be constructed out of the materials. I believe he will be elected. The Shannons, English, Cornoyer and all the French are up in arms for Logan." (Referring to the fact that Stout had been a Know Nothing.) "Jo and Ahio Watt are electioneering for Logan in Yamhill so you may know h—— is broke loose."—*Nesmith to Deady*, April 25.

even represent the anti-slavery opinions of the majority of the convention from which they were sent forth.<sup>1</sup>

The *Argus*, in commenting upon the convention and its results, declared that for the first time in the history of Oregon the issue was now fairly made between the Republicans as the friends of free laborers and the Jo Lane Democracy as the advocates of negro-breeding, negro-extension fanaticism. The first time, because "the blacks", under the management of Lane, had run up their true colors. The 2600 fanatics who had voted for slavery in Oregon had now succeeded in crushing out the free soil element from the Democratic party by throwing Grover, Williams and other free state men overboard;<sup>2</sup> by striking out from their creed "everything that savored of a license for Democrats to favor freedom and take an occasional squint at the North Star." This was the issue which Adams had been impatiently trying to force ever since the establishment of the *Argus*. "Parson" Adams was no "waiter on Providence." Believing the world to be full of time-crusted error and that he had a special mission to set it to rights, he preferred to lead the forlorn hope and let the slow and conservative masses come limping after him in their own good time, never doubting but that they would come sooner or later.<sup>3</sup> He now entered upon the campaign with aggressiveness and enthusiasm.

The great question of the power of the federal government over slavery in the Territories occupied so important a place in the campaign of 1859 that it is necessary to dwell upon the state of opinion in Oregon upon the national issue. When the doctrine of squatter sovereignty was given official and legal sanction in the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska bill in 1854, the free state men in Oregon were quick to repudiate it. But

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<sup>1</sup>Statesman, May 3.

<sup>2</sup>"We heard one of the most prominent and most active of Lane's supporters from Southern Oregon denounce Williams for writing his free-state letter, and the Salem organ for publishing such 'rotten abolitionism'. The publication of that letter did the work for Williams and the endorsement of it has done the work for many more, and these headless Democrats are now as effectually killed off in the party as though they had joined the Republicans."—*Argus*, April 30.

<sup>3</sup>Characterization by M. P. Deady in correspondence to the San Francisco Bulletin, dated May 20, 1863.

the spirit of the West—of the self-governing frontiersmen, was too strong. Years before the doctrine of popular sovereignty was enunciated, the Oregon pioneers had established the first American government upon the Pacific Coast solely upon the principles of absolute popular sovereignty. It was the cardinal doctrine in their political creed—in fact it *was* their common creed, before the new country became involved in national politics. When the Democratic party espoused it as a political issue, the Oregon Democrats pushed their favorite doctrine to the extreme, as will be shown. The opposition were thus placed on the defensive, and at first were prompted by the binding force of party loyalty to oppose it, but only in its relation to the slavery question. In all other particulars they were in favor of the people of the Territories managing their own affairs without interference from Washington. The distinction was hard to maintain. Hence, when the pro-slavery Democrats abandoned the ground of squatter sovereignty for that of direct intervention in behalf of slavery, it gave the Oregon Republicans, especially the more conservative ones, the opportunity to espouse the doctrine, in its entirety. There was thus very little difference between them and the Douglas Democrats. It is interesting to note that at a time when allegiance to party doctrines was almost a matter of religion, that inherent desire of the Western pioneers to govern themselves was strong enough to override party barriers on the one question of popular sovereignty. On the other hand, the fact that many Western Democrats saw fit to forsake the popular doctrine suggests how infatuated was their devotion to the cause of the slave power.

The typical Western attitude on the question was expressed by Bush in 1857 in an editorial on squatter sovereignty,<sup>1</sup> in which he declared that the principle should be extended to give people in the Territories power over all legislation to the same extent as enjoyed by citizens of the states. "We are just as capable here in Oregon to elect our officers, make our laws unrestricted and in all things govern ourselves, as we were, scattered over the thirty-one states. And we are presuming

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<sup>1</sup>Statesman, March 17, 1857.

enough to claim that we of right ought to have the same powers here that we exercised there." In 1858 when the Oregon Democrats supported Buchanan and his Lecompton policy in Kansas, their attitude toward the Douglas doctrine was passive, at best. This made it easy for Dryer to declare his sentiments upon the subject. He stated that he was and always had been in favor of the Kansas-Nebraska doctrine of popular sovereignty and had opposed the Kansas-Nebraska bill merely because it disturbed a long-established and accepted settlement of a difficult problem. He went so far as to declare that he would cheerfully support either Douglas or Crittenden for the presidency upon that issue.<sup>1</sup> Now in 1859, with Lane and the radical, slavery-extension Democrats in control of the party organization, Bush renewed his allegiance to Douglas and his doctrines with increased zeal, as if to atone for his apostasy of the previous year. In developing to its last conclusion his favorite doctrine, he declared that the only power which Congress possessed over the Territories by virtue of the Constitution was based upon the "power to dispose of and make all useful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States"; that it conferred no power to legislate for the people of the Territories, to appoint officers over them nor to govern them in any way whatsoever; Congress therefore had no warrant whatever for the existing system of territorial government, yet the people had long submitted in silence to many of the same grievances for which their forefathers threw off the British yoke. "Officers have been imposed upon us without our consent and in direct violation of our will. Our judges have been made dependent upon the will of the President and Senate alone for the tenure of their offices and for the amount and payment of their salaries. The administration of justice has been obstructed by the passage of unjust and unwholesome laws. We have been repeatedly annoyed by the insolence of officials not of our own choosing. And all this without even the semblance of constitutional authority!"<sup>2</sup> What a familiar ring this has to those who have fol-

<sup>1</sup>Oregonian, May 8, 1858.

<sup>2</sup>Statesman, March 1, 1859.



lowed at all the proceedings of the old colonial assemblies in pre-revolutionary days! It indicates clearly what the doctrine of popular sovereignty meant to Oregonians.

The State Democratic platform of 1859 stated that the decision of the Supreme Court in the Dred Scott case was acknowledged by the Democratic party as a correct interpretation of the Constitution on the question of slavery. This was a palpable evasion as there were no less than three distinct interpretations of that decision among the Democrats. The Douglas phase of the doctrine, that of absolute non-intervention, was still very generally held by the rank and file of the Oregon democracy. Many, however, were now following the lead of Lane, who maintained that slavery existed in the Territories by virtue of the Constitution and that the people of the Territories had no authority either to establish it or prohibit its introduction. Bush hence charged him with having deserted the Democratic principle of popular sovereignty and with having taken up "the quibble devised by some place-seeking demagogues, to cheat unthinking Southern extensionists."<sup>1</sup> Lane had merely advanced to the Buchanan or Administration interpretation, but Bush refused to recognize the latter as Democratic doctrine. The radical Democratic position was voiced by Editor O'Meara in the Standard, who declared for positive intervention by Congress for the protection of slavery in the Territories. He charged that whoever held a different doctrine was a Black Republican. He attacked Douglas for his Freeport speech doctrine, as either a demagogue or "a very thick-headed numbskull," charging him with utterances treasonable and subversive of the Constitution.<sup>2</sup>

In the campaign, Lansing Stout, the Democratic candidate for Congressman, supported the Administration doctrine and even approached that of the interventionists, maintaining that the people were obliged to enact laws for the protection of slaves in the Territories. He was supported on the stump by Smith and Lane, who spent most of their time in denouncing

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<sup>1</sup>Statesman, editorial, "Then and Now", Nov. 22, 1859.

<sup>2</sup>Quoted in Argus, May 28.



the Statesman and defending themselves. Bush carried Stout's name at the head of the ticket in the Statesman. He did nothing for his election, however, merely damning him with faint praise—very faint, indeed. Almost the entire editorial space of the Statesman was devoted to the detraction and defamation of Smith and Lane, vituperative and scurrilous to the last degree; especially when directed against Delazon Smith, or "Delusion" Smith, as he was universally referred to by his political enemies. This tendency of Oregon journalism towards the Billingsgate, which had always been pronounced and which became known as the "Oregon Style," reached its height, or rather, depth, during this period.

David Logan was a very conservative Republican, to say the least. He could almost as truly be termed a Douglas Democrat. But he was the logical candidate to run upon the Republican platform adopted in April. It had declared for popular sovereignty, "in deference to the prevailing public sentiment" as Bush said,<sup>1</sup> and Logan, in harmony with a few independent Republicans like Eli Thayer, was a hearty supporter of the doctrine, which he now freely proclaimed. In this he was strongly supported by the Oregonian which declared that the Republican party of Oregon stood firmly pledged to non-intervention.<sup>2</sup> It is not to be presumed that this position upon the question was pleasing to all the Republicans of the state, by any means. A very different class of men rallied round the Republican standard in 1858 and 1859, from those who had set up that standard in the Territory, and who for their devotion to the cause of human freedom had been known by the inelegant but expressive term—"dam-Black Republican." The growing success of the party in the East, *and* the admission of Oregon to statehood, which would bring Oregon Republicans in direct connection with the National organization, was exerting a decisive influence. Many, who had taken no active interest in the great moral issues at stake, seeing an opportunity to aid in the defeat of the Democratic party and to advance their own fortunes,

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<sup>1</sup>Statesman, Aug. 2.

<sup>2</sup>Oregonian, Aug. 6.

political and otherwise, now "rallied to the party conventions and were active participants therein, as though they were native to the manor born."<sup>1</sup> With these, party success was more important than unwavering allegiance to some abstract principle. It must not be inferred, however, that the later accessions to the party were actuated solely by personal and mercenary motives. Many of those who had been associated with the beginnings of Republicanism in Oregon might almost be termed professional reformers. They had aided in the temperance movement, had been identified with Knownothingism, abolitionism and had advocated various doctrines regarded by the public at large as visionary and fanatical. This explains to some degree the extent to which the early Republicans had been maligned. Their very zeal caused them to be mistrusted. It was the anxious purpose of the Republicans in 1859 to free themselves from all stigma of fanaticism, and to inspire confidence in themselves as statesmen rather than to incur suspicion as doctrinaires. This did not mean necessarily a desertion of Republican principles. It did imply a re-statement of them and some readjustment, as on the question of popular sovereignty. It is from this general situation that the conservative, semi-orthodox attitude of the Oregon Republicans in 1859, must be viewed. Dryer, who was a good example of the second edition Republicans, gave apt expression to their viewpoint in the following: "There are a large number of people possessed of a kind of night-mare upon this question of slavery. This class is composed both of the ultraists for and the ultraists against slavery. Each branch of this class seems to have set up a Congo Negro as a fit subject or idol of their worship. We are none of this class and we speak for the Republican party of Oregon by authority, when we say that they do not compose either branch of this class."<sup>2</sup>

The election resulted in almost a political revolution. The issue was long in doubt and when finally determined it was found that Stout had been elected by a bare majority of 16

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<sup>1</sup>Davenport, in *Oregon Historical Quarterly* for December, 1908, p. 334.

<sup>2</sup>*Oregonian*, Aug. 6.

votes. With the Democrats in charge of the machinery of election, this was indeed a narrow margin. The result was astounding to both parties. Marion county, the seat of the government and of the Salem Clique, which normally might have been expected to give Stout a majority of some 500 votes, gave Logan 782 majority. Bush declared that he voted for Stout, but admitted that he did not give him the earnest, active support that he would have done had he been regularly and fairly nominated. He attributed the decreased Democratic vote to lukewarmness on the part of many old Democrats, due to Stout's former active connection with the Know Nothing party in California. Particularly was that the case in Marion county in which there was a large foreign vote. On the other hand, Logan's espousal of popular sovereignty made it easy for many Douglas Democrats to support him. It was only by the Democratic steadfastness of the isolated southern counties that the great defection was overcome and Stout's election secured.

Out of the sacrifice of Grover at the Democratic convention in April by the Lane faction, there grew a political vendetta among the Democrats. As a result there was no election of United States senator at the special session of the legislature called in May to complete the details of state organization. Smith had drawn the short term which had expired on the adjournment of Congress, within a month after he and Lane had been sworn in. He had been in Washington during the winter, however, and had thoroughly identified himself with Lane in the growing strife between the latter and the Clique. He apparently entered upon a life of dissipation in Washington, lurid stories of which found their way back to Oregon to be given full publicity by Smith's enemies, particularly by Bush in the Statesman. Smith made a desperate effort for re-election at the May special session, with the apparent support of Lane, whose good faith toward his colleague and ally was questioned. Though Smith was himself discredited and unable to secure re-election, the factions in the legislature seemed evenly enough divided so that the Lane-Smith forces could probably have prevented the election of a member of the oppos-

ing faction. At any rate, the Democrats were not disposed to force the issue at this time by opening up the struggle and chose to allow the seat in the Senate to remain vacant until the regular session of the next legislature in 1860.

At the State Democratic Convention in April, when the Lane faction by its secret caucus captured the organization, it secured control of the state central committee. The committee met at Eugene, September 24, and issued a call for a state convention to be held at Eugene, November 16, to elect delegates to the National Democratic Convention to be held at Charleston the coming year. A split occurred in the committee over the choice of a basis of representation on which delegates to the Convention should be chosen. The Lane forces were in the majority and voted that the representation be based upon the Democratic vote for Stout in the late election. This was in accordance with past procedure. It would now prove favorable to Lane as it would very materially diminish the number of delegates from the Willamette Valley counties, where opposition to him was pronounced, and increase the number from the southern counties which remained loyal to him. The Bush or Salem faction maintained that this basis disfranchised two thousand Democrats who had constantly battled for Democratic principles "both before and since the late Democratic candidate proved recreant to those principles by a desertion to the secret conclave of an oath-bound enemy." Accordingly the minority, demanding representation upon the basis of the vote cast for Whiteaker for governor in 1858, withdrew and issued a separate call to the Democracy of Oregon in which they asked the counties to send delegates to the Eugene convention on this basis. In this action they were upheld and supported by the Statesman.

The reasons for Lane's special anxiety to secure control of the Eugene convention lay in his ambition to be named on the national ticket to be nominated at Charleston. As early as 1852 he was an active candidate for the nomination of president of the United States and received no little encouragement.<sup>1</sup> From that time on he had been at least a willing, re-

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<sup>1</sup>In the collection of Lane letters in the possession of the Oregon Historical Society are to be found scores of private letters addressed to Lane in reference to his candidacy in 1852 and chances of success. Most of these are from politicians of his home state, Indiana, but several other states are also represented.

ceptive candidate and he now became a very active one. He was a bombastic, self-assertive man, and was a born leader, which made him a success as a General or a politician. He had not the capabilities or training of a statesman and his speeches on the issues of the day were composed largely of generalities and platitudes. But recognizing no limitation to his abilities, he placed no limitations on his ambitions. Depending first on his successful military record as the "Marion of the Mexican War", and as the hero of a number of Indian fights in the far West, and second upon his standing with his party and especially the pro-slavery element of it, he entered the field for national honors. Of course the first requisite of success was to secure the endorsement of his own state. This would have been easy enough a few years previous—for instance, when, after his decisive victory over Gaines in 1855, Bush had carried the legend in the *Statesman*, "Gen. Joseph Lane for President in 1856."<sup>1</sup> But with the Oregon Democracy divided into two hostile camps, Lane faced a difficult situation in 1859.

The Lane-Stout faction was in control of the Eugene Convention. The committee on credentials reported in favor of decreasing the size of the delegations of certain counties which were based on the vote for Whiteaker, in accordance with the recommendation made by the minority of the state central committee. For example, the size of the Marion county delegation was thus cut from ten to four members.<sup>2</sup> Upon the adoption of the report, Grover arose and said: "I am authorized by eight counties here to say to the convention on behalf of those counties, that they retire from the convention upon this decision." All the delegates from Marion, Polk, Wasco, Clatsop, Washington, Umpqua, Coos and Curry counties then retired. They immediately assembled in another room where they resolved that inasmuch as they did not represent the majority of the counties in the state, they would not elect delegates to the Charleston convention, but pledged the De-

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<sup>1</sup>Supra, p. 72.

<sup>2</sup>Proceedings, *Statesman*, Nov. 22.



mocracy of the several counties represented, to a cordial support of the National Democratic nominee.

After the withdrawal of the eight counties from the convention, a committee of one member from each remaining county, reported the names of Lane, M. P. Deady, and Stout as delegates to the national convention. The committee on resolutions, on which was L. F. Mosher, son-in-law of Lane, reported the following: "Resolved—That we recommend to the consideration of the Charleston Convention as a candidate for the office of chief magistrate, our distinguished fellow citizen, the Hon. Gen. Joseph Lane, and our delegates are instructed to use their best efforts to secure his nomination for the office of President or Vice President, and that we pledge the Democracy of the state to support cordially the nominee of the Charleston Convention, whoever he may be." In this manner, through resolutions, did Mosher very cleverly get a "unanimous" declaration for Lane, in the face of the fact that even of the eleven counties which remained after the bolt, Josephine and Clackamas had instructed for Douglas for President; Yamhill for Dickinson and Benton had voted down a Lane resolution. As far as the published proceedings of the various county conventions show, only Lane, Douglas and Jackson had instructed for Lane. The Statesman declared that these "cut-and-dried" instructions for Lane were merely to resuscitate his political popularity and give him some prestige as a candidate for re-election to the Senate. "The Presidential humbug is merely to catch gulls with."<sup>1</sup>

The Oregon Weekly Union, anti-Clique organ, thus commented on the schism in the Eugene Convention: "A factious minority, heretofore controlling the action of the party, having lost the confidence long reposed in them, failing to coerce the Convention \* \* \* have deliberately withdrawn and propose to form a new organization \* \* \* There can be but one object in view and that is an *Open or Secret Alliance with the Republicans!* The whole influence of the Statesman for the

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<sup>1</sup>Proceedings, Statesman, Nov. 22.



past year has been on that side."<sup>1</sup> It is noticeable during this period that the Statesman made no attack on Republicanism, devoting its energies to fighting the Lane-Stout-Smith faction. The Union on the other hand, was diligent in exposing the dangers of Sewardism and the revolutionary tendency of Republicanism. The striking political events of 1860 were thus foreshadowed.

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<sup>1</sup>Union, Nov. 19.

## OREGON HISTORY FOR "THE OREGON SYSTEM"

*By F. G. Young*

"The Oregon System" is a new and unique organization for the determination of public policy in the affairs of a commonwealth. It is being more and more freely used, and promises in Oregon to reduce to a minimum the functioning of the historic representative government. The people not only rule but their rule is direct, summary, absolute and affects well-nigh all their public interests. In law-making deference to the specialist, the experienced and the expert is at a low ebb. The supposed virtues of the deliberative assembly with parliamentary procedure come dangerously near being repudiated altogether. This tendency of almost exclusive reliance upon the "system" means immediate and definitive action by popular vote on all matters of commonwealth interest.

This direct responsibility assumed by the people for the detailed control of their public affairs involves an ambitious role. The elevation of the voter to the position of law-maker and judge affecting highest matters of state must, in the nature of things, if all is to be well, be paralleled by a corresponding enlargement of his understanding, enlightenment of his views and ennoblement of his attitude. How is he to be made equal to this new sphere that he has assumed?

Trip-hammer action of public opinion is secured through the initiative, referendum and recall, in the easy and absolute form of their application in Oregon. Vox populi, vox Dei is here adopted as an inherent principle of the eternal order and is being applied without reservation. The situation brings all our social heritage into the crucible, subject to complete transformation on any election day. Democracy has thus been made absolute and the machinery for registering its edicts simplified to the last degree. Under such a regime, unless there is a corresponding response in effort and attitude on the part of the individual voter, only inspiration can save from serious, cumulative and consequently fatal blunders. How can

the private citizen attain the insight and poise that will insure action for the public good?

The Oregon system stands for the *ne plus ultra* in popular government. It represents a farthest extreme, and the shift to it came as the sequel to most trying experience with representative government. The selected few, or the controlling elements among them, into whose hands the interests of the masses had been intrusted had regularly played false or were duped. The strong were getting undue privileges, and were escaping their share of the public burdens. No return to normal conditions of social justice seemed possible under the old dispensation. Such proficiency in political manipulation, in machine methods and in the arts of demagoguery had been developed by the designing few that in one way or another the people were too frequently served the crusts while the loaf went to the special interests. Under such circumstances the only thing to do was done—the people took the management of their collective affairs directly into their own hands. But however fully justified the people were in making this venture, the almost complete renunciation of parliamentary procedure and representative government by them imposes certain conditions that must be fulfilled if hopes are to be realized.

Suppose the rank and file of an army were to presume to march abreast of their captains and to be heard in the councils of their commanders. Would not that be preposterous if the common soldier were not as fully versed in the art of war as his general and had not as large a part in the elaborating of the plan of campaign? By as much as the art of statesmanship is of a higher order than that of war so much higher order of proficiency does the Oregon system imply to be the possession of the private citizen.

Furthermore, the exchange of the system of representative government for pure democracy is made just when the state is sweeping forward into a new era. Its development is becoming intense; a more complex economic organization is being assumed and so many constructive readjustments are urgently called for. Vision is needed if the rapidly increasing density of

population is not to develop the social abominations that are the curse of the older communities. While all conditions are thus nascent are the features being incorporated into the new rural community that will make for the best uplift in the life of the boy and girl and the woman and the man on the farm? Are the fixed improvements in the towns, their systems of public utility, affecting the health, comfort and enjoyments of all classes, being planned with foresight and with concern for the highest interests dominant? Eastern states and cities are awakening to the fact that as the result of past heedlessness even herculean labors give but faint and long deferred hopes of ever attaining the ideal. It is true that these woeful sacrifices of the interests of the masses of this and future generations took place there while representative institutions were in vogue. But a like outcome can be avoided here only as constructive and far-seeing policies are devised and supported. Such are the exigencies in the situation in Oregon that confront the system. A competent performance of his part by the individual voter involves a high calling.

It may be that the disposition of the Oregon people with regard to the measure of use to be made of the system of direct legislation has been misinterpreted. Possibly the almost exclusive recourse to it, and the slight put upon representative government, were due to the necessity of correcting old abuses and adjusting perverted economic relations resulting from the failings of the former system. Suppose, therefore, that a renewal of confidence in the procedure of representative government is to be expected and that the machinery of direct legislation is to be held in reserve for the occasions when legislatures go amiss, yet the necessity is not removed of the need of fine discernment on the part of the private citizen in judging rightly when these occasions arise and in determining what substitute measures will bring greater and more lasting good to all. Moreover, situations are bound to develop when the individual's interest will clash with that of the community as a whole. Verily, the Oregon system applied even most

moderately imposes an arduous duty upon the individual voter. The old order of citizenship no longer suffices.

Civic duty was formerly comprehended in that attention to public affairs which insured a wise choice among the several candidates for each public position to be filled. The demands made on civic virtue under the Oregon system are incomparably more rigorous. It calls for a zeal in public service and a devotion to the common good that insures an understanding of the issues involved in each problem as it arises. Nothing less than a finer loyalty, a livelier patriotism and a higher social intelligence must now prevail if all is to be well. With these alone, if at all, can a people secure that discernment and poise that mean safety and social progress with the complex and tangled affairs of a commonwealth under a pure democracy.

Considering the closely limited time and vitality available to the average citizen, after the demands of his personal and essential non-political interests have been met, the political duties he owes under a pure democracy are simply stupendous. It is a matter, therefore, of the utmost importance for Oregon welfare that the best possible conditions be afforded him for the fulfilment of his part faithfully and well. The most effective service to him towards giving him competence for his new role is that which secures for him an intimate and realistic comprehension of our commonwealth life. This will also kindle in him a real and abiding love for Oregon, insuring zeal and loyalty. The key for this consummate grasp of the situation in which he is to be a factor is a knowledge of its course of evolution, of its making, of its essential history.

What are the vital elements in the heritage of the Oregon people of today, in natural resources, in ideas, in customs and in institutions? What also are their handicaps? What are the vital features in their commonwealth organization and what purposes have actuated its policies? What vision or lack of vision has each generation displayed? Its history viewed from this standpoint of human and higher interests conserved no doubt discloses much that causes feelings of regret. The leaders followed have in many cases misled. The people have now

and then been heedless affecting interests of transcendant importance. And yet a commonwealth not unlovely was transmitted to the present generation.

Commonwealths for twentieth century life are not born but are made. They are gradually remolded and renewed through transforming the elements and factors in them coming out of the past. The imaginations of the people prompted by their best impulses and using the best achievements recorded in the history of humanity outline their visions and their ideals. For the realization of these ever-receding millenniums the struggle goes on.

The "Oregon System" presupposes that every citizen will be able and will be disposed to ascend to this high plane of thought and action so that he will be a positive factor in effecting change in the right direction.



## DOCUMENT

### *Report on the Territory of Oregon*

*By Charles Wilkes, Commander of the United States Exploring  
Expedition, 1838-1842*

The Wilkes expedition was a world cruise. It was to demonstrate the safe sailing routes and commercial opportunities open to American shipping on the high seas, that is, in those regions which would naturally be covered in passing from the eastern shores of this country, via Cape Horn, around the world. The islands of the Pacific were to be given special attention.

In the long list of his instructions we find that he was to "direct course to the Northwest Coast of America, making such surveys and examinations, first of the territory of the United States on the seaboard, and on the Columbia river, and afterwards along the coast of California, with special reference to the Bay of San Francisco, as you can accomplish by the month of October following your arrival."

But Lieutenant Wilkes' examination of the Oregon Country was altogether more extended and purposeful than these meagre instructions seemed to call for. The Puget Sound country was given a careful examination; a party was sent east across the mountains; from Fort Vancouver another party was dispatched overland to California.

Immediately following his departure from the Northwest Coast, he sent from Honolulu to the Navy Department, November 24, 1841, a preliminary report on the Oregon Territory, promising a complete statement of what his examination had revealed as soon as he returned to New York. His sense of responsibility in the matter was expressed in his first report as follows: "Having been well aware of the little information in possession of the Government relative to the northern section of this country [Oregon], including the Strait of Juan de Fuca, with its extensive sounds and inlets, I thought it proper, from its vast importance in the settlement of the boundary

question, though not embraced in my instructions, to devote a large portion of my time to a thorough survey and examination, without, however, overlooking or neglecting any part of that which was distinctly embraced in them."

The report given below, made on his return to this country, would probably have been of use to Webster in the negotiations leading to the Webster-Ashburton treaty, signed August 9, 1842, had Ashburton's instructions not forestalled all possibility of the settlement of the Oregon boundary question at that time. The Columbia river was the most favorable line that Lord Ashburton was by his government authorized to offer.

During the following session of Congress Pendleton in the House and Linn in the Senate introduced resolutions requesting this report from the Secretary of the Navy. The Pendleton resolution was passed, but the action was rescinded after a few days; Linn's was on his own motion on January 5, 1843, laid on the table. The reluctance of the administration to make this report of Wilkes public in January, 1843, was due probably in part to the earnest plea in it that none of the Oregon country south of  $54^{\circ}-40'$  should be relinquished by the United States; the plan of military occupation of the region which Wilkes outlined and urged action on was no doubt the main cause for withholding the report.

The measure of influence that the publication of this report early in 1843 would have had will be appreciated when it is remembered that Linn's bill passed the Senate on February 3, 1843, and that nearly a thousand pioneers were just then preparing to rendezvous at Westport, Missouri, for migration to Oregon.

The text of the document was taken from the Congressional Record of July 15, 1911. Hon. Thomas W. Prosch of Seattle had secured a copy from the archives of the Navy Department, and had prevailed upon Representative William E. Humphrey of Washington to secure the publication of it as an extension of his "remarks in the Record." Through the kindness of Mr. Prosch the editor of the Quarterly was furnished with the copy.

U. S. S. Vincennes,  
New York, June, 1842.

Sir: I have the honor to inclose herewith a report upon the Territory of Oregon, together with the maps referred to therein.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,  
CHARLES WILKES,  
Commander of Exploring Expedition.

To the Hon. A. P. Upshur,  
Secretary of the Navy, Washington.

#### OREGON TERRITORY.

The Territory embraced under the name of Oregon, and represented on the accompanying map, extends from latitude  $42^{\circ}$  north to that of  $54^{\circ} 40'$  north and west of the Rocky Mountains.

Its natural boundaries, were they attended to, would confine it within the above geographical limits. On the east it has the range of Rocky Mountains along its whole extent; on the south those of the Klamet Range running on the parallel of  $42^{\circ}$  and dividing it from upper California; on the west the Pacific Ocean; and on the north the western trend of the Rocky Mountains and the chain of lakes near and along the parallels of  $54^{\circ}$  and  $55'$  north dividing it from the British Territory, and it is remarkable that within these limits all the rivers that flow through the Territory take their rise.

The Territory is divided into three natural belts or sections, viz:

First. That between the Pacific Ocean and Cascade Mountains, or western section.

Second. That between the Cascade Mountains and the Blue Mountain Range, or middle section.

Third. That between the Blue and Rocky Mountain chains, or eastern section, and this division will equally apply to the soil, climate, and productions.

The mountain ranges run for the most part in parallel lines with the coast, and rising in many places above the snow line (here found to be 6,500 feet) would naturally produce a difference of temperatures between them and also affect their productions.

Our surveys and explorations were confined for the most part to the two first, claiming more interest, being less known and more in accordance with my instructions.

### MOUNTAINS.

The Cascade Range, or that nearest the coast, runs from the southern boundary on a parallel with the seacoast the whole length of the Territory, north and south, rising in many places in high peaks from 12,000 to 14,000 feet above the level of the sea in regular cones. Their distance from the coast line is from 100 to 150 miles, and they almost interrupt the communication between the sections except where the two great rivers, the Columbia and Fraser, force a passage through them.

There are a few mountain passes, but they are difficult and only to be attempted late in the spring and in the summer.

A smaller range (the Classet) lies to the north of the Columbia between the coast and the waters of Puget Sound and along the Strait of Juan de Fuca.

This has several high peaks which rise above the snow line, but from their proximity to the sea they are not at all times covered.

Their general direction is north and south, but there are many spurs or offsets that cause this portion to be very rugged.

The Blue Mountains are irregular in their course and occasionally interrupted, but generally trend from north by east to northeast and from south to southwest. In some parts they may be traced as spurs or offsets of the Rocky Mountains. Near the southern boundary they unite with the Klamet Range, which runs east and west from the Rocky Mountains.

The Rocky Mountains are too well known to need description. The different passes will, however, claim attention here-

after. North of  $48^{\circ}$  the ranges are nearly parallel and have the rivers flowing between them.

#### ISLANDS.

Attached to the territory are groups of islands bordering its northern coast. Among these are the large islands of Vancouver and Washington or Queen Charlotte, the former being 260 miles in length and 50 in breadth, containing about 15,000 square miles, and the latter 150 miles in length and 30 in breadth, containing 4,000 square miles. Though somewhat broken in surface their soil is said to be well adapted to agriculture.

They have many good harbors, and have long been the resort of those engaged in the fur trade. They enjoy a mild and salubrious climate, and have an abundance of fine fish frequenting their waters, which are taken in large quantities by the natives.

Coal of good quantity is found here, specimens of which I obtained. The Hudson Bay Co. have made a trial of it, but owing to its having been taken from near the surface it was not very highly spoken of. Mines of mineral are also said to exist by those acquainted.

They both appear to be more densely inhabited than other portions of the territory. The natives are considered a treacherous race, particularly those in the vicinity of Johnstons Strait, and are to be closely watched when dealing with them.

At the southeast end of Vancouver there is a small archipelago of islands through which the Canal de Arro runs; they are for the most part inhabited, well wooded, and composed of granite and pudding stone, which appears to be the prevailing rock to the north of a line east and west of the Strait of Juan de Fuca. They are generally destitute of fresh water, have but few anchorages, and strong currents render navigation among them difficult.

The islands near the mainland, called on the maps Pitts and Banks, or the Prince Royal Islands, are of the same character and are only occasionally resorted to by the Indians for the purposes of fishing.

The coast of the mainland north of the parallel of  $49^{\circ}$  is broken up by numerous inlets, called canals, having perpendicular sides and very deep water in them, affording no harbors and but few commercial inducements to frequent.

The land is equally cut up by spurs from the Cascade Range, which here intersects the country in all directions, and prevents its adaptation to agriculture.

Its value is principally in its timber, and it is believed that few, if any, countries can compare with it in this respect.

There is no point on the coast where a settlement could be formed between Frasers River or  $49^{\circ}$  north and the northern boundary of  $54^{\circ} 40'$  north that would be able to supply its own wants.

The Hudson Bay Co. have two posts within this section of the country, Fort McLaughlin in Mill Bank Sound, in latitude  $52^{\circ} 10'$  north, and Fort Simpson, in latitude  $54^{\circ} 30'$  north, within Dundas Island, and at the entrance of Chatham Sound, but they are solely posts for the fur trade of the coast, and are supplied twice a year with provisions, and so forth.

It is believed that the company has yet no establishment on any of the islands, but I understood it was in contemplation to make one on Vancouver Island in the vicinity of Nootka Sound or that of Clayoquot.

Owing to the dense fogs the coast is extremely dangerous, and they render it at all times difficult to approach and navigate upon.

The interior of this portion of the territory is traversed by these ranges of mountains, with the several rivers which take their rise in them, and is probably unequaled for its ruggedness, and from all accounts incapable of anything like cultivation.

The Columbia in its trend to the westward under the parallel of  $48^{\circ}$  cuts off the central or Blue Mountain Range, which is not again met with until on the parallel of  $45^{\circ}$ . From  $45^{\circ}$  they trend away to the south and afterwards to the south and west until they fall into the Klamet Range. They are partially wooded.



## RIVERS.

The Columbia claims the first notice. Its northern branch takes its rise in the Rocky Mountains in latitude  $50^{\circ}$  north longitude  $116^{\circ}$  west; from thence it pursues a northern route to near McGillivary's Pass through the Rocky Mountains. At the boat encampment it is 2,300 feet above the level of the sea, where it receives two small tributaries—the Canoe River and that from the Committee's Punch Bowl; from thence it turns south, having some obstruction through its safe navigation, and receiving many tributaries in its course to Colville, among which are the Kootanie, or Flat Bow, and the Flat Head, or Clarke River, from the east, and that of Colville from the west.

It is bounded in all its course by a range of high mountains, well wooded, and in places expands into a line of lakes before it reaches Colville, where it is 2,200 feet above the level of the sea, having a fall of a little over 100 feet in 220 miles.

To the south of this it trends to the west, receiving the Spokane River from the east, which is not navigable, and takes its rise in the Lake of Coeur d'Alene. Thence it pursues a westerly course for about 60 miles, receiving several smaller streams, and at its bend to the south it is joined by the Okanogan, a river that has its source in a line of lakes, affording canoe and boat navigation of considerable extent to the north.

The Columbia thence passes to the south until it reaches Walla Walla, or the latitude of  $45^{\circ}$ , a distance of 160 miles, receiving the Piscous, Yakima and Point de Bois, or Entiyatecombe, from the west, which take their rise in the Cascade Range; and also its great southeastern branch, the Saptin, or Lewis, which has its source in the Rocky Mountains near our southern boundary, and brings a large quantity of water to increase its volume.

The Lewis is not navigable even for canoes, except in reaches. The rapids are extensive and of frequent occurrence, it generally passing between the Rocky Mountain spurs and the Blue Mountains.

It receives the Kooscooske, Salmon, and several other rivers from the east and west, the former from the Rocky Mountains, the latter from the Blue Mountains, and were it navigable would much facilitate the intercourse with this part of the country. Its length to its junction with the Columbia is 520 miles.

The Columbia at Walla Walla is 1,286 feet above the level of the sea and about 3,500 feet wide; it now takes its last turn to the westward, receiving the Umatilla, Quisnels, John Days, and Shutes Rivers from the south and Cathlats from the north, and pursuing its rapid course for 80 miles previous to passing through the range of Cascade Mountains in a series of falls and rapids that obstruct its flow and form insurmountable barriers to the passage of boats by water during the flood; these difficulties are, however, overcome by portages. From thence is had still-water navigation for 40 miles, where its course is again obstructed by rapids; then to the ocean, 120 miles, it is navigable for vessels of 12 feet draft of water at the lowest state of the river, though obstructed by many sand bars.

In this part it receives the Willamette from the south and the Cowlitz from the north. The former is navigable to the mouth of the Klackamus 20 miles, 3 miles below its falls, for small boats; the latter can not be called navigable except for a small part of the year during the flood, and then only for canoes and barges.

The width of the Columbia within 20 miles of its mouth is much increased, and it joins the ocean between Cape Disappointment and Point Adams, forming a sand spit from such by deposit and causing a dangerous bar, which greatly impedes its navigation and entrance.

Fraser River, next claims attention. It takes its rise in the Rocky Mountains near the source of Canoe River, taking a westerly course of 80 miles. It then turns to the south, receiving the waters of Stuarts River, which rises in a chain of lakes near the northern boundary of the Territory.

It then pursues a southerly course, receiving the waters of the Chilcouteu, Pinkslitsa, and several small streams from the west, and those of Thompsons River, Quisnells, and other streams from the east (these take their rise in lakes, and a few may be navigated in canoes by making portages), and under the parallel of  $49^{\circ}$  it breaks through the Cascade Range in a succession of falls and rapids, and after a westerly course of 70 miles it empties into the Gulf of Georgia in the latitude of  $49^{\circ} 07'$  north. This latter portion is navigable for vessels that can pass its bar drawing 12 feet of water; its whole length being 350 miles.

The Chikeeles is next in importance. It has three sources among the range of hills that intersect the country north of the Columbia River. After a very tortuous course and receiving some smaller streams issuing from the lakes in the high ground near the headwaters of Hoods Canal and Puget Sound, it disembogues in Grays Harbor. It is not navigable except for canoes; its current is rapid and the stream much obstructed.

To the south of Columbia there are many small streams, but three of which deserve the name of rivers, the Umpqua, Too-too-tut-na (or Roque River), and the Klamet, which latter empties into the ocean south of the parallel of  $42^{\circ}$ . None of these form harbors capable of receiving a vessel of more than 8 feet draft of water, and the bars for the most part of the year are impassable from the surf that sets in on the coast.

The character of the great rivers is peculiar, rapid and sunken much below the level of the country, with perpendicular banks; indeed, they are, as it were, in trenches, it being extremely difficult to get at the water in many places owing to the steep basaltic walls, and during their rise they are in places confined by walls, which back the water some distance, submerging islands and tracts of low prairie, having the appearance of extensive lakes.

#### LAKES.

There are in the various sections of the country many large and small lakes. The largest of these are the Okanogan Chain,

Stuarts, Quisnells, and Kamloops in the northern section; the Flat Bow, Coeur d'Alene, and Kallushelm in the middle section; and those forming the headwaters of the large rivers in the eastern section.

The country is well watered, and there are but two places where an abundance, either from rivers, springs, or rivulets, can not be obtained.

The smaller lakes add much to the picturesque beauty of the country. They are generally at the headwaters of the smaller streams. The map will point out more particularly their extent and locality.

### HARBORS.

All the harbors formed by the rivers on the seacoast are obstructed with extensive sand bars, which make them difficult to enter, and they are continually changing. The rivers bring down large quantities of sand, which on meeting with the ocean is deposited, causing a gradual increase of the impediment which already exists at their mouths. None of them can be deemed safe ports to enter.

The entrance to the Columbia is impracticable two-thirds of the year, and the difficulty of leaving equally great.

The north sands are rapidly increasing and extending farther to the south.

In the memory of several of those who have been longest in the country, the cape has been encroached upon some hundred feet by the sea and the north sand much extended to the south, and during my short experience nearly half an acre of the middle sand was washed away in the course of a few days. These are known to change every season.

The exploration of the Clatsop, or south channel, it is believed, will afford more safety to vessels capable of entering the river. The depth of water on the bar seems not to have changed, though the passage has become somewhat narrower.

Grays Harbor will admit of vessels of light draft of water (10 feet), but there is but little room in it on account of the

extensive mud and sand flats. A survey was made of it, to which I refer for particulars.

This, however, is not the case with the harbors found within the Strait of Juan de Fuca, of which there are many, and no part of the word affords finer inland sounds or a greater number of harbors than can be found here capable of receiving the largest class of ships, and without a danger to them that is not visible. From the rise and fall of the tide (18 feet all) facilities are afforded for the erection of work for a great maritime nation. For further information our extensive surveys of these waters are referred to.

#### CLIMATE.

That of the western section is mild throughout the year, neither experiencing the cold of winter nor the heat of summer. By my observations the mean temperature was found to be 54° F.

The prevailing winds in the summer are from northwest, and in the winter from southwest and southeast, which are tempestuous.

The winter is supposed to last from December to February; the rains usually begin to fall in November and last until March, but they are not heavy though frequent. Snow sometimes falls, but it seldom lays over three days.

The frosts are early, occurring in the latter part of August; this, however, is to be accounted for by the proximity of the mountains. A mountain or easterly wind invariably causes a great fall in the temperature. These winds are not frequent. During the summer of our operations I find but three days noted of easterly winds having occurred.

The nights are cold and affect the vegetation so far that corn will not ripen.

Fruit trees blossom early in April at Nisqually and Vancouver, and at the former on the 12th of May peas were a foot high and strawberries were in full bloom, and salad had already gone to seed 3 feet high.

The mean height of the barometer during our stay at Nisqually was 30.046 inches, and of the thermometer  $66^{\circ} 58'$  F.

The greatest heat was  $98^{\circ}$  F. at 2 p. m. July 4, and at 4 a. m. of the same day it was  $50^{\circ}$  F. The lowest degree was  $39^{\circ}$  at 4 a. m. May 22, and at 5 p. m. of the same day the temperature was  $72^{\circ}$  F.

From June to September at Vancouver the mean height of the barometer was 30.32 inches and of the thermometer  $66^{\circ} 33'$  F. Out of 160 days 96 were fair, 19 cloudy, and 11 rainy.

The rains are light. This is evident from the hills not being washed, but having a sward to their top although at great declivity.

The second or middle section is subject to droughts; during the summer the atmosphere is much dryer and warmer, and the winter much colder than in the western section. Its extremes of heat and cold are more frequent and greater, the mercury at times falling as low as  $18^{\circ}$  F. in the winter and rising to  $108^{\circ}$  F. in the shade in the summer, and a daily difference of temperature of about  $40^{\circ}$  F. It has been, however, found extremely salubrious, possessing a pure and healthy air.

The stations of the missionaries and posts of the Hudson Bay Co. have afforded me the means of obtaining information relative to the climate; although they have not kept full data, yet their observations afford a tolerably good knowledge of the weather.

In summer it is cooled by the strong westerly breezes to replace the vacuum produced by the heated prairie grounds. No dew falls in this section.

The climate of the third or easterly section is extremely variable; the temperature during the day, ranging from  $50^{\circ}$  to  $60^{\circ}$ , renders it unfit for agriculture, and there are but few places in its northern part where the climate would not effectually put a stop to its ever becoming settled.

In each day, from the best account, one has all the changes incident to spring, summer, autumn, and winter. There are places where small farms might be located, but they are few in number.



## SOIL.

That of the first, or western, section varies in the northern part from a light-brown loam to a thin vegetable earth, with gravel and sand as the subsoil; in the middle parts, from a rich, heavy loam and unctuous clay to a deep, heavy black loam on a trap rock; and in the southern the soil is generally good, ranging from a black vegetable loam to decomposed basalt, with stiff clay and portions of loose, gravelly soil. The hills are generally basalt, sandstone, and slate.

Between the Umpqua and the boundary the rocks are primitive, consisting of talcose, hornblende, and granite, and produce a gritty and poor soil. There are, however, some portions with rich prairies covered with oaks.

The soil of the second, or middle, section is for the most part a light, sandy loam, in the valleys rich alluvial, and the hills are generally barren.

The third, or eastern, section is a rocky, broken, and barren country, stupendous mountain spurs in all directions, and affording little level ground, with snow lying on the mountains nearly, if not quite, the whole year through.

## AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIONS, ETC.

The first section, for the most part, is a well-timbered country. It is intersected with the spurs or offsets from the Cascade Mountains, which render its surface much broken up; these are covered with a dense forest. It is well watered, and communication between the northern, southern, and middle parts is difficult on account of the various rivers, spurs of mountains, and so forth.

The timber consists of pines, firs, spruce, oaks (red and white), ash, arbutus, arbor vitæ, cedar, poplar, maple, willow, cherry, and yew, with a close undergrowth of hazel, rubus, roses, and so forth.

The richest and best soil is found on the second, or middle, prairie, and is best adapted for agriculture, the high and low being excellent for pasture land.

The line of woods runs on the east side and near the foot of the Cascade Range.

The climate and soil are admirably adapted for all kinds of grain—wheat, rye, oats, barley, peas, and so forth. Corn does not thrive in any part of this territory where it has been tried. Many fruits appear to succeed well, particularly the apple and pear. Vegetables thrive exceedingly well and yield most abundantly.

The surface of the middle section is about 1,000 feet above the level of the lower or western section, and is generally a rolling prairie country. That lying to the north of the parallel of  $48^{\circ}$  is very much broken, with mountain chains and rivers; consequently barren and very rugged. From the great and frequent changes in its temperature it is totally unfitted for agriculture, but is well filled with game of all kinds that are found in the country.

The mountain chains on the parallel of  $48^{\circ}$  are cut off by the Columbia, as before stated, leaving an extensive rolling country in the center of the territory, which is well adapted for grazing.

The southern part of this section is destitute of timber or wood, unless the worm wood, *Artimesia*, may be so called. To the north of the parallel of  $49^{\circ}$  it is covered with forests. Wheat and other grains grow well in the bottoms where they can be irrigated.

The soil in such places is rich and capable of producing most anything.

The missionaries have succeeded in getting good crops. Stock succeeds here even better than in the lower country, and, notwithstanding the severe cold, their cattle are not housed, nor is provender laid in for them, the country being sufficiently supplied with fodder in the natural hay that is abundant everywhere on the prairie, and is preferred by the cattle to the fresh grass of the bottoms.

No attempts at agriculture have been made in this section except at Fort Hall. The small grains thrive tolerably well, to-

gether with vegetables, and a sufficient quantity has been obtained to supply the wants of the post.

The ground is well adapted for grazing in the prairies, and, despite its changeable climate, stock is found to thrive well and endure the severity of the winters without protection. This section is exceedingly dry and arid, rains seldom falling and but little snow. The country is partially timbered and the soil much impregnated with salts. The missionary station on the Kooscooske, near the western line of this section, is thought by the missionaries to be a wet climate.

The soil along the river bottoms is generally alluvial, and would yield good crops were it not for the overflowings of the river, which check and kill the grain. Some of the finest portions of the land are thus unfitted for cultivation; they are generally covered with water before the banks are overflowed in consequence of the quicksands that exist in them and through which the water percolates.

The rivers of this territory afford no fertilizing properties to the soil, but, on the contrary, are destitute of all substances, being perfectly clear and cold. The temperature of the Columbia in the latter part of May was 42° and in September 68°.

The rise of the streams from the Cascade Mountains usually takes place twice a year—in February and November from the rains; that of the Columbia in May and June from the melting of the snows. Sometimes it is very sudden, if heavy rains occur at that period, but usually it is gradual in reaching its greatest height about the 6th to the 15th of June.

Its perpendicular rise is from 18 to 20 feet at Vancouver, where a line of embankment has been throw up to protect the lower prairie, but it has been gradually flooded, although the water has not risen within a few feet of its top, and has in most cases destroyed the crops; it is the intention to abandon its cultivation and devote it to pasturage.

The greatest rise in the Willamette takes place in February, and I was informed that it rose sometimes 20 to 25 feet, and quite suddenly in some places, but soon subsides. It occasionally causes much damage. Both the Willamette and Cowlitz

in their lower sections are much swollen by the backing of their waters during the height of the Columbia and all their lower ground submerged. This puts an effectual bar to their being used for anything but pasturage, which is fine throughout the year, and used excepting in the season of the floods, when the cattle are driven to the high grounds.

My knowledge of the agriculture of this territory, it will be well to mention, is derived from visits being made to the various settlements, except Fort Langley and Fort Hall. That of the Indians on the different islands in Puget Sound and the Admiralty Inlet consists of potatoes principally, which are extremely fine and raised in great abundance, and now constitute a large portion of their food.

At Nisqually the Hudson Bay Co. had fine crops of wheat, oats, peas, potatoes, and so forth. The wheat, it was supposed, would yield 15 bushels to the acre. The farm has been two years under cultivation, and is principally intended for a grazing farm and dairy. They have now 70 milch cows, and make butter, and so forth, to supply their contract with the Russians.

The Cowlitz farm is also in the western section; the production of wheat is good, about 20 bushels to the acre; the ground, however, has just been brought under cultivation. They have here 600 acres, which are situated on the Cowlitz River, about 30 miles from the Columbia. The company is about to erect a saw and grist mill. This farm is finely situated, and the harvest of 1841 produced 7,000 bushels of wheat.

Several Canadians are also established here, who told me that they succeeded well with but little work. They have erected buildings, live comfortably, and work small farms of 50 acres.

I was told that the stock on this farm does not thrive so well as elsewhere. There are no low prairie grounds on that side of the river in the vicinity, and it is too far for them to resort to the Kamass plains, a fine grazing country a few miles distant, where the wolves would make sad depredations with the increase if not well watched.

The hilly portions of the country, although the soil in many parts is very good, yet it is so heavily timbered as to make it

in the present state of the country valueless. This is also the case with many fine portions of level grounds, but there are large tracts of fine prairie suitable for cultivation and ready for the plow.

The Willamette Valley is supposed to be the finest portion of the country, though I am of opinion that many portions of it will be found far superior in the southern part of it. It is the largest settlement and is included within a distance of some 15 miles in the northern part of the valley. About 60 families are settled there, the industrious of whom appear to be thriving.

They are composed of American missionaries and the trappers and Canadians who were formerly servants of the Hudson Bay Co. All of them appear to be in good condition, but I was, on the whole, disappointed from the reports that had been made to me, not to find it in a state of greater forwardness, considering the advantages the missionaries have had.

In comparison with our own country, I should say that the labor required in this Territory for subsistence and to acquire wealth is in the proportion of one to three, or, in other words, a man must work through the year three times as long in the United States to gain the like compensation. All the care of stock which occupies so much time with us requires no attention here, and on their rapid increase he would alone support himself.

The wheat of this valley yields 35 to 40 bushels for one sown, or 20 to 30 bushels to the acre, its quality is superior to that grown in the United States, and its weight near 4 pounds to the bushel heavier. The above is the yield of new land, but it is believed that it will greatly exceed this after the third crop, when the land has been broken up and well tilled.

After passing into the middle section the climate undergoes a decided change; in place of the cool and moist atmosphere, one that is dry and arid is entered, and the crops suffer from drought. The only wood or bush seen is the wormwood (*Artemisia*), and this only in the neighborhood of the streams. All cultivation has to be more or less carried on by irrigation.

The country bordering the Columbia above the hills to the north and south, is the poorest in the Territory, and has no doubt lead many to look upon the middle section as perfectly useless to man. Twenty or 30 miles on either side of the river is so, but beyond that a fine grazing country exists, and in very many places there are portions of it that might be advantageously farmed.

On the banks of the Walla Walla, a small stream running into the Columbia, about 25 miles from the company's post, a missionary is established, who raises very fine wheat on its low bottoms and is enabled to use its waters for the purpose of irrigation. This is also the case at the mission establishment at Lapwai, on the Kooscooske, where fine crops are raised; grains and vegetables thrive remarkably well, and some fruits are raised.

In the northern part of this section, at Chimekaine, there is another missionary station near the Spokane, and at Colville the country is well adapted for agriculture, and it is successfully carried on.

Colville supplies all the northern posts, and the missionaries are doing well. The northern part of this section will be able to supply the whole with wood. Here also the changes of temperature are great during the 24 hours, but are not injurious to the small grain. The cultivation of fruits has not been successful.

#### FISHERIES.

It will be almost impossible to give an idea of the extensive fisheries in the rivers and on the coast; they all abound in salmon of the finest flavor, which run twice a year, from May until October, and appear inexhaustible; the whole population live upon them.

The Columbia produces the finest and probably affords the greatest numbers. There are some few of the branches of the Columbia that the spring fish do not enter, but they are plentifully supplied in the fall.



The great fishery of the Columbia is at The Dalles, but all the rivers are well supplied; the last one on the northern branch of the Columbia is near Colville, at the Kettle Falls, but they are found above this in the river and its tributaries.

In Fraser River they are said to be very numerous, but not so large; they are unable to get above the falls, some 80 miles from the sea.

In the rivers and sounds are found several kinds of salmon, salmon trout, sturgeon, cod, carp, sole, flounders, ray, perch, herring, lamprey eels, and a kind of smelt called sprow in great abundance; also large quantities of shellfish, viz, crabs, clams, oysters, mussels, and so forth, which are all used by the natives and constitute the greater proportion of their food.

Whales in numbers are found along the coast, and are frequently captured by the Indians in and at the mouth of the Strait of Juan de Fuca.

#### GAME.

Abundance of game exists, such as elk, deer, antelopes, bears, wolves, foxes, muskrats, martins, beavers, a few grizzly bears, and sifflines, a kind of rat which are eaten by the Canadians.

In the middle section, or that designated as the rolling prairie, no game is found. In the eastern section the buffalo is met with.

The fur-bearing animals are decreasing in number yearly, particularly south of the parallel of  $48^{\circ}$ . Indeed it is very doubtful whether they are sufficiently numerous to return the expenses of hunting them.

The Hudson Bay Co. have almost the exclusive monopoly on this business. They have decreased owing to being hunted without regard to season. This is not, however, the case to the north; there the company have been left to exercise their own rule and prevent the indiscriminate slaughter of the old and young and out of the proper season.

In the spring and fall the rivers are literally covered with geese, ducks, and so forth.

In the eastern section the buffalo abound and are hunted by the Oregon Indians, as well as the Blackfeet. Wolves are troublesome to the settlers, but they are not so numerous as formerly.

From the advantages this country possesses it bids fair to have an extensive commerce on advantageous terms with most parts of the Pacific.

It is well calculated to produce the following, which certainly in a few years after its settlement would become its staples, viz, furs, salted beef and pork, fish, grain, flour, wool, hides, tallow, lumber and perhaps coal. A ready market for all these is now to be found in the Pacific and in return for them sugars, coffee, and other tropical productions may be had at the Sandwich Islands—advantages that few new countries possess, viz, the facilities of a market and one that in time must become of immense extent.

#### MANUFACTURING POWER.

This country, it is believed, affords as many sites for water power as any other, and in many places within reach of its navigable waters.

The timber of the western section to the south of  $49^{\circ}$  is not so good as that of the north; this is imputed to the climate being milder and more changeable. A great difference is found between the north and south sides of the trees, the one being a hard and close grain, while the other is open and spongy.

To the north of the parallel of  $49^{\circ}$ , on Frazer River, an abundance of fine timber for spars of any dimensions is easily obtained.

There will always be a demand for the timber of this country at high prices throughout the Pacific. The oak is well adapted for ship timber, and abundance of ash, cedar, cypress, and arbor-vitæ may be had for fuel, fencing, etc.; and although the southern part of the middle section is destitute of timber it may be supplied from the eastern and northern parts by water carriage.

Intercommunication would at first appear to be difficult between the different parts of the country, but I take a different view of it. Stocks of all kinds thrive exceedingly well, and they will in consequence always abound in the Territory. The soil affords every advantage for the making of good roads, and in process of time transportation must be comparatively cheap.

### SETTLEMENTS.

They consist principally of those belonging to the Hudson Bay Co., and where the missionaries have established themselves. They are as follows: In the western section Fort Simpson, Fort McLaughlin, Fort Langley, Nisqually, Cowlitz, Fort George, Vancouver, and Umpqua; Fort St. James, Barbine, Alexandria, Chilcoute, Kamloops (on Thompson River), Okanogan, Colville, and Walla Walla in the middle; and in the eastern Kootenai and Fort Hall. Fort Boise has been abandoned, as has also Kaima, a missionary settlement on the Kooscooske.

These are all small settlements, consisting of a palisade or picket with bastions at their corners around the houses and stores of the company, sufficient to protect them against the Indians, but in no way to be considered as forts. A few Indians have lodges near them who are dependent on the fort for their food and employment.

These forts, being situated for the most part near the great fisheries, are frequented by the Indians, who bring their furs to trade for blankets, and so forth, at the same time they come to lay in their yearly supply of salmon. Vancouver is the principal depot from which all supplies are furnished and returns made. At Vancouver the village is separated from the fort and near the river. In addition to its being the depot of the Hudson Bay Co., there is now attached to it the largest farm of the Puget Sound Co., the stockholders in which are generally the officers and servants of the Hudson Bay Co. They have now farms in successful operation at Vancouver, Cowlitz, Nisqually, Colville, Fort Langley, and the Fualtine

[Tualatin] Plains, about 10 miles from Vancouver, all of which are well stocked. They supply the Russian post at Sitka, under contract, with the variety of articles raised on them.

They have introduced large herds and flocks into the Territory from California, and during our stay there several thousands were imported. In this they are doing incalculable good to the Territory and rendering it more valuable to the future settlers; at the same time it exerts an influence in domesticating the Indians, not only by changing their habits, but food, and attaching them to a locality.

The Indians of this Territory are not a wandering race, as some have asserted, but change for food only, and each successive season will generally find them in their old haunts seeking it.

The settlements established by the missionaries are at the Willamette Falls and Valley; at Nisqually and Clatsop in the western section, and at The Dalles, Walla Walla, Lapwai, and Chimekaine on the Spokane in the middle.

Those of the middle section are succeeding well, and, although little progress has been made in the conversion of Indians to Christianity, yet they have done much good in reforming some of their vices and teaching them some of the useful arts, particularly that of agriculture, which has had the effect, in a measure, to attach them to the soil, construct better houses, exchanging their corn, and so forth, with those who hunt, for Buffalo meat.

The men now rear and tend their cattle, plant their corn and potatoes, and the squaws attend to their household and employ themselves in knitting and weaving, which they have been taught.

They raise on their small patches corn, potatoes, melons, and so forth, irrigating the land for that purpose. There are many villages of Indians still existing, though greatly reduced in number from former estimates.

## POPULATION.

It is extremely difficult to ascertain with accuracy the amount of population in the Territory, particularly of Indians, who change to their different abodes as the fishing seasons come around, and if [this fact were] not attended to would produce very erroneous results.

The following is believed to be very nearly the truth. If anything, it is overrated:

Vancouver and Washington Islands.....	5,000
From the parallel of 50° to 54° 40' north.....	2,000
Penns Cove, Whidbeys Island, and mainland opposite (Scatchat).....	650
Hoods Canal (Suquamish and Toando).....	500
At and about Okanogan.....	300
About Colville, Spokane, etc.....	450
Willamette Falls and Valley.....	275
Pillar Rock, Oak Point, and Col. R.....	300
Clallams:	
Port Discovery . . . . .	150
Port Townsend . . . . .	70
New Dungeness . . . . .	200
Walla Walla, including the Nezperces, Snakes, etc.....	1,100
Killamouks, north of Umpqua.....	400
Closset tribe: Cape Flattery, Quiniault, to Point Grenville.....	1,250
Blackfeet tribes that make excursions west of the Rocky Mountains.....	1,000
Birch Bay . . . . .	300
Frazers River . . . . .	500
Chenooks . . . . .	209
Clatsops . . . . .	220
At the Cascades.....	150
At The Dalles.....	250
Yakima River . . . . .	100
Shutes River . . . . .	125
Umpquas . . . . .	400
Rogue River . . . . .	500
Klamets . . . . .	300
Shastys . . . . .	500
Kalapuyas . . . . .	600
Nisqually . . . . .	200
Chikeeles and Puget Sound.....	700
Cowlitz Klackatacs . . . . .	350
Port Orchard Suquamish.....	150
<b>Total . . . . .</b>	<b>19,204</b>

The whole Oregon territory may be estimated as containing 20,000. Of whites, Canadians, and half-breeds there are between 700 and 800, of whom about 150 are Americans; the rest are settlers and the officers and servants of the company.

The Indians are rapidly decreasing in all parts of the country. The causes are supposed to be their rude treatment of diseases and the dissipated lives they lead.

The white American population, as far as I have been able to judge of them, are orderly, and some industrious, although they are, with the exception of the missionaries, men who have led for the most part dissolute lives.

The absence of spirits as long as it continues will probably secure them from other excesses. Very much to their credit, they have abandoned the use of spirituous liquors by consent of the whole community. I can not but view this territory as peculiarly liable to the vice of drunkenness. The ease with which the wants of man are obtained, the little labor required, and consequent opportunities of idleness will render it so. The settlers of the Willamette Valley have with a praiseworthy spirit engaged to prevent the establishment of distilleries, and there are yet no places where spirits can be bought, to my knowledge, in the territory.

It is highly creditable to the H. B. Co. that on a vessel arriving on the coast with spirits on board, in order to prevent its introduction they have purchased the whole, while at the same time their storehouses were filled with it. They have with praiseworthy zeal interdicted its being an article of trade, being well satisfied that it is contrary to their interests and demoralizing in its effects on all the tribes and people with whom they have to deal, rendering them difficult to manage, quarrelsome among themselves, and preventing their success in hunting.

Endeavors have likewise been made by the officers of the company to induce the Russians, on their side, to adopt their example and do away with it as an article of trade, but hitherto without success.

It no doubt has been one of the causes effecting the decrease of the native tribes, as it was formerly almost the only article of trade.

In the event of this territory being taken possession of, the necessity of circumscribing the use and sale of spirits can not



be too strongly insisted upon by legal enactment, both to preserve order and avoid expense.

As far as the Indians have come under my notice, they are an inoffensive race, except perhaps those in the northern part; but the depredations committed on the whites may be traced to injuries received or from superstitious motives.

#### MISSIONARIES.

Little has yet been effected by them in Christianizing the natives. They are principally engaged in the cultivation of the mission farms and in the care of their own stock, in order to obtain flocks and herds for themselves, most of them having selected lands. As far as my personal observation went, in the part of the country where the missionaries reside there are very few Indians, and they seem more occupied with the settlement of the country and in agricultural pursuits than missionary labors.

When there, I made particular inquiries whether laws were necessary for their protection, and I feel fully satisfied that they require none at present. Besides the moral code it is their duty to inculcate, the Catholic portion of the settlement, who form a large majority of the inhabitants, are kept under control by their priest, who is supposed to act in unison with the others in the proper punishment of all bad conduct.

The boundary will next claim my attention.

In a former report to the honorable Secretary of the Navy I stated that the boundary formerly proposed, viz, that of the 49° latitude, ought not to be adopted, and the following are my reasons for it, viz:

First. That it affects the value of all that portion of the middle and eastern sections south of that parallel.

Second. That it places the whole territory south of that parallel completely under the control and at the mercy of the nation who may possess the northern by giving the command of all the water and a free access into the heart of the territory at any moment.

Third. Giving up what must become one of the great highways into the interior of the territory altogether, viz, Frasers River.

Fourth. And also, to all intents and purposes, possession of the fine island of Vancouver, thereby surrendering an equal right to navigate the waters of the Strait of Juan de Fuca, and by its possession the whole command of the northern waters.

Fifth. Giving rise to endless disputes and difficulties after the location of the boundary and in the execution of the laws after it is settled.

Sixth. Affording and converting a portion of the territory which belongs to us into a resort and depot for a set of marauders and their goods, who may be employed at any time in acting against the laws and to the great detriment of the peace not only of this territory but of our Western States by exciting and supplying the Indians on our borders.

The boundary line on the 49° parallel would throw Frasers River without our territory, cut off and leave seven-eighths of the fine island of Vancouver in their possession, together with all the harbors, including those of Nootka, Clayoquot, and Nitinat, which afford everything that could be desired as safe and good ports for naval establishment. They would not only command the Strait of Juan de Fuca and the inlets and sounds leading from it, but place the whole at any moment under their control by enabling them to reach and penetrate to the heart of the territory with a comparatively small force and destroy it and lay it waste.

The whole middle and part of the eastern section would be cut off from their supplies of timber by losing its northern part, from which it can only be supplied with an article of the first necessity both for fuel and building, rendering it dependent on a foreign state.

We should also give up what may be considered a storehouse of wealth in its forests, furs, and fisheries, containing an inexhaustible supply of the first and last of the best quality.

Endless difficulties would be created in settling the boundary, for Great Britain must or does know that the outlet

from Frasers River by way of Johnstons Strait, between Vancouver's Island and the mainland, is not only difficult but dangerous to navigate from the rapidity of the currents and can not be made use of. She will, therefore, probably urge her claim to the southern line, say, the Columbia, as the boundary which they are desirous of holding, and are now doing all in their power to secure its permanent settlement through the Hudson Bay Co., and extending the laws by which she governs the Canadas over her own citizens settled in the territory; and by the delays of our Government hope to obtain such a foothold as will make it impossible to set aside their sovereignty in it. This, as far as I was enabled to perceive, is evidently their intention, being extremely desirous to appear as the larger claimants of the territory and to assert their right to the soil to the north of the Columbia River.

This boundary would subject the island of Vancouver to two sovereignties and, of course, their laws. It never could be surrendered by us without abandoning the great interest and safety of the territory. And it will be perceived how very prejudicial it would be if the British in possession of the northern section should establish free ports, and thus be enabled to counteract all our revenue laws, and so forth.

The contract for supplies with the Russians now enables the Hudson Bay Co. to purchase the grain and produce from the Willamette settlers, but in a short time it will be supplied by themselves through their great farms, and consequently the produce of settlers can obtain no market whatever, all trade being in the hands of that company.

The Puget Sound Co. are enabled to compete with and undersell all others from the low price of labor—£17 per annum—absence from duties, and the facilities of sending their products to market by the ships of the Hudson Bay Co., which hitherto have returned almost empty, the furs occupying but a small part of the vessel, which will hereafter be filled with hides and tallow; this must operate very prejudicially to the settlement and increase their hold on the territory.

I have stated these views in order to show the necessity of prompt action on the part of the Government in taking possession of the country in order to obviate difficulties that a longer delay will bring about and prevent many persons from settling advantageously.

For the military occupation of the country I conceive that it would be necessary to establish a post at some central point, viz, Walla Walla, and I herewith inclose you a topographical sketch of the surrounding country within 30 miles. As respects its position with reference to the country, you will be well informed by the map.

It appears to me to be peculiarly adapted to the general defense of the territory in order to preserve peace and quietness among the Indian tribes.

The Nez Percés, Snakes, and Blackfeet are those generally engaged in committing depredations on each other and requiring more looking after than those of the other tribes. They are in and around this section of country.

The facilities for maintaining a post and at a moderate expense are great; the river abounds with salmon during a greater part of the year and the herds thrive exceedingly well. Cattle are numerous, particularly horses, which are the best that the country affords. Grains of all kind flourish, and at about 25 miles distant the missionaries have an establishment from which I have but little doubt the troops could be supplied.

The climate is remarkably fine and healthy. There is, perhaps, no point from which operations could be carried on with so much facility to all parts of the territory as this, it being situated, as it were, at the forks of the two principal branches of the Columbia. Any number of horses could be kept at little or no expense, and a force could reach almost any part of the lower territory with the least possible delay.

The permanent land force I conceive necessary to keep this territory quiet and peaceable would be one company of dragoons and one of infantry, say, 200 men.

The only Indians of the country south of 49° who are disposed to make war upon the whites are the Klamets, residing

on the southern borders of the territory along Rogue and Klamet Rivers and in the passes of the Shasty Mountains. The show of a small force would, I am sure, have a good tendency in preventing their depredations on the whites who pass through the country, their hostility to whom, in a great measure, is to be ascribed to the conduct of the whites themselves, who leave no opportunity unimproved of molesting them. Cases have frequently occurred of white men shooting a poor, defenseless Indian without any provocation whatever.

A friendly disposition, with sufficient force to prevent any attack, could not fail to bring about the desired disposition on their parts.

The country they inhabit is a very rich one and would afford all the necessaries as well as the comforts of life.

A steamer having a light draft of water, a small fort on Cape Disappointment, and a few guns on Point Adams to defend the south channel with its dangerous bar, would be all sufficient for the defense of Columbia River.

Some points within the Strait of Juan de Fuca, Admiralty Inlet, or Puget Sound might be settled, where supplies, and so forth, could be had and depots established.

Two Government steamers would be able to protect our trade and territory and prevent disturbances among the northern tribes; they would be a more efficient force than stationary forts, and much more economical.

In case of difficulties, steamers would be enabled to reach any part of the coast from these points in two days.

In the event of hostilities in this country, the posts, so called, of the Hudson Bay Co. are not to be considered of strength against any force but Indians; they are mere stockades, and all their buildings, granaries, and so forth, are situated without the palisades.

They could offer but little resistance to any kind of armed force and their supplies could readily be cut off, both by sea and land.

The occupation of the mouth of the Columbia River, together with some point in the Strait of Juan de Fuca or the waters

and sounds leading from it, I view as highly necessary in any event, and there is no force so well adapted for the security of this territory as that of steamers.

The waters of Puget Sound might be effectually defended from a naval force by occupying the narrows leading to it through which vessels must enter; at all times a dangerous narrow path, with strong current, no anchorage, and the winds almost always variable. I refer you to the charts which show this point distinctly.

Much has been said of the effective force of the Hudson Bay Co.; this, in my opinion, is an entire mistake and exaggeration of it.

It is true that the servants of the company are bound to bear arms during their term of servitude, but they are without any sort of discipline, few in number, generally of the class of farmers, worn-out Canadians, some few Iroquois Indians, and other tribes from the Canadas, and illy adapted to bear arms; about 100 at all the posts could be raised.

With regard to the natives, they are so distributed in small tribes that I am confident they would only be looked to as scouts and messengers, and those of the northern tribe would be too unruly to meddle with.

I am decidedly of opinion that the company would do everything to avoid the territory becoming a scene of war, particularly its officers.

They are now for the most part bound up with its peaceful occupation, being largely engaged in agriculture and grazing, which must all in a measure be sacrificed. And there would also be great difficulty, if not a total interruption, in their carrying on their fur trade.

It is not very probable that they would make any very strenuous endeavors to retain their interests under the British authority, as they well know that they may come in for the preservation of their property under the preemption right by transferring it to citizens of the United States, some of whom are well known to be interested and active partners in the business.



There are four passes through the Rocky Mountains. The one known as McGillivarys Pass, by the Committee's Punch Bowl is very difficult, and can only be used during the summer months, at which time the parties of the Hudson Bay Co. pursue this route.

Proceeding south we come to the great district through which Lewis and Clark found their way; and, finally, the two southern routes, which are preferable, susceptible of being used at almost all seasons, and a good wagon road may be constructed with little expense.

This leads to the first post of the Hudson Bay Co., viz, Fort Hall, established by Capt. Wyeth, and has since been transferred to the company, so that it is readily to be perceived that the difficulties of communication with the territory are far less for us than the British.

I can not close this report without doing justice to the officers of the Hudson Bay Co.'s service for their kind and gentlemanly treatment to us whilst in the territory, and to bear testimony that during all my intercourse with them they seemed to be guided by one rule of conduct, highly creditable to them not only as men of business but to their feelings as gentlemen.

They afforded us every assistance that lay in their power, both in supplies and means of accomplishing our duties.

There are many persons in the country who bear testimony to the aid and kindness rendered to them in their outset, and of their hospitality it is needless to speak, for it has become proverbial.

To conclude, few portions of the globe, in my opinion, are to be found so rich in soil, diversified in surface, or capable of being rendered the happy abode of an industrious and civilized community.

For beauty of scenery and salubrity of climate it is not surpassed. It is peculiarly adapted for an agricultural and pastoral people, and no portion of the world beyond the Tropics is to be found that will yield so readily to the wants of man with moderate labor.

Respectfully submitted,

CHARLES WILKES,  
Commanding Exploring Expedition.









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ORGANIZED DECEMBER 17, 1898

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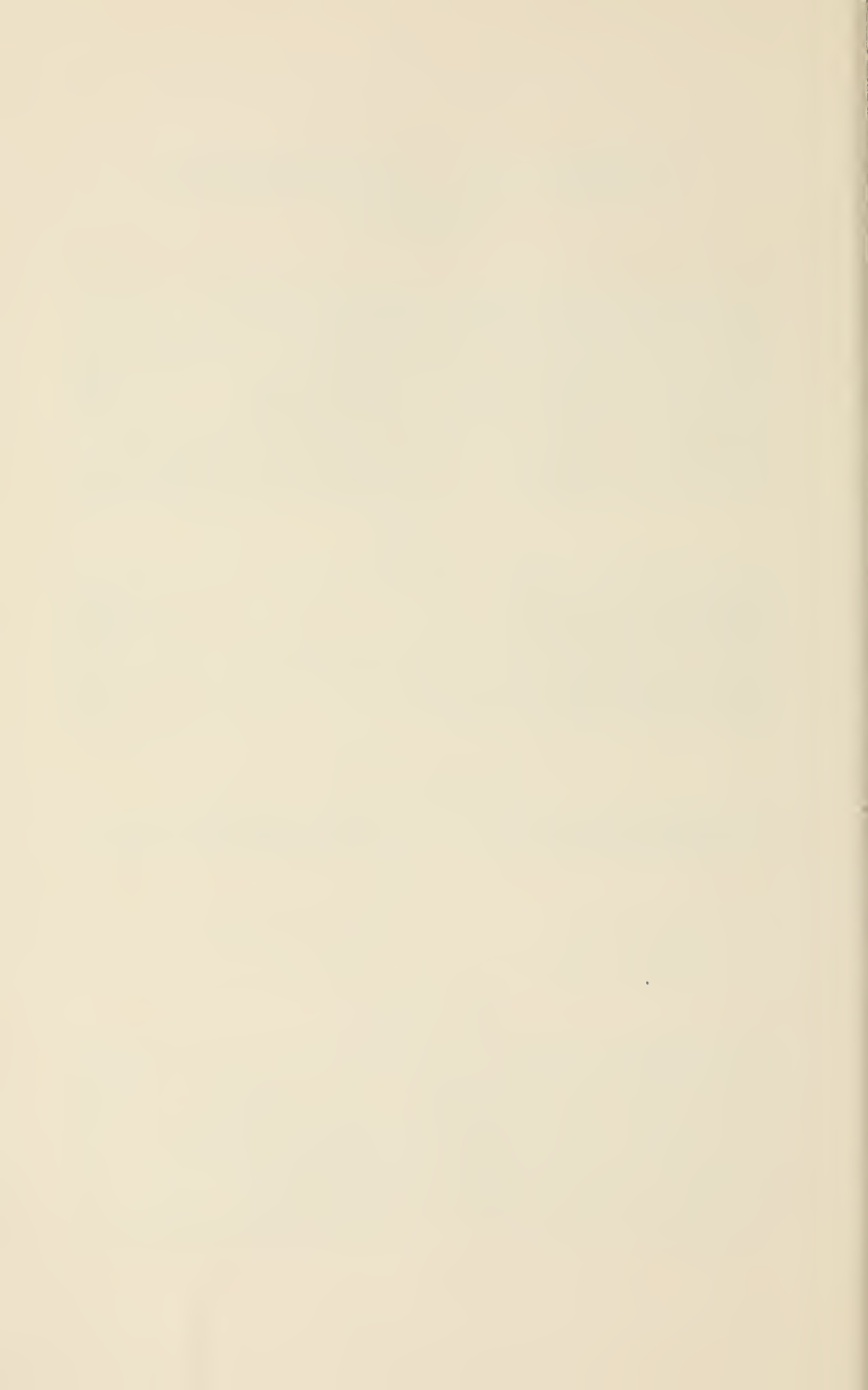
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## THE RISE AND EARLY HISTORY OF POLITICAL PARTIES IN OREGON—V

By Walter Carleton Woodward

### Chapter X

#### THE POLITICAL REVOLUTION OF 1860

While now increasing rapidly in numbers and influence, as strikingly demonstrated in the election of 1859, Oregon Republicans felt the need of a capable leader to champion their cause. They had several men of much ability, but few if any of them were fluent, convincing speakers who could contend creditably with such a masterful orator as Delazon Smith or even with such effective speakers as Judge Willams, Lane and a number of other Democrats. And in a day when political oratory was so important a factor in moulding public sentiment, the handicap suffered by the Republicans was very serious, indeed. Logan ranked with these men, but he was not sound morally, and he was not able to inspire confidence in his sincerity in, and devotion to, the principles for which he was supposed to stand. Years of association together of the prominent Republicans in Oregon politics, breeding the inevitable rivalries and jealousies, made it well nigh impossible that any Oregon Republican of ordinary ability should be accorded that generous allegiance so necessary to success.

As early as in the spring of 1858 it had been suggested at an informal conference of Republican leaders, that an invitation be sent to Col. E. D. Baker, of California, to come to Ore-

gon and take a part in the approaching campaign.<sup>1</sup> Such vigorous objection was made to the idea of an interloper being made so prominent in Oregon affairs, that the matter was quietly but quickly dropped. But Baker was kept informed on the trend of political affairs in Oregon and received encouragement from his northern political friends to remove and cast his political fortunes with Oregon Republicans.<sup>2</sup> He had made a great name for himself in California as an orator and occupied a prominent place in the political activities of that state. But he was a man of the highest political ambition, and having failed of election to the United States Senate from California, looked with favor upon the overtures from Oregon.

In the first weeks of the year 1860<sup>3</sup> he took up his residence with his family at Salem and entered at once upon the political activities of his newly-adopted home. His position was a difficult one. The reason for his removal to Oregon was understood by all. It was natural for those Republicans who had been fighting the battles of the party in days of adversity to look with some jealousy and suspicion upon an outsider who now came in with the ostensible purpose of claiming the first great reward of the party success which now seemed possible. The old spirit of "Oregon offices for Oregonians" was still prevalent. But Baker was a past master in the arts of a politician. He had all the physical endowments that go to make a successful public man—the handsome appearance of a fine physique, dignified, courtly bearing, an incomparable voice. At the same time he had those winning graces of mind and heart which gave him a personal magnetism that was irresistible. He was a politician, but he was more. He gave an impression of a kindly, sincere interest in those about him which the mere affectations of a political demagogue would not inspire. The richness and power of his eloquence was

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<sup>1</sup> Davenport in *Oregon Historical Quarterly* for December, 1908, whose account of the appearance of Baker in Oregon has been followed by the writer.

<sup>2</sup> Dyer stated publicly in October, 1860, that both he and Logan had requested Baker to come to Oregon and run for United States Senator. See *Argus*, Oct. 27, 1860.

<sup>3</sup> Col. Baker arrived at Portland, Feb. 21, 1860.

unquestioned.<sup>1</sup> He delivered a great oration on the succeeding fourth of July to which even Bush referred as "eloquent and soul-stirring."<sup>2</sup> His surpassing gift as an orator, combined with his personal charm of manner, disarmed political friends of lurking jealousy and softened the opposition of political enemies. "A great change came over the country with the advent of the Colonel." Oregon Republicans now had a distinguished leader who inspired them with confidence and enthusiasm for coming political struggles.

The State Democratic Convention met April 17 at Eugene, and was controlled by the Lane Democrats. Six of the eight counties which had withdrawn from the convention the preceding November, were not represented. Delazon Smith was chairman of the committee on platform and resolutions, among the other members being the Democratic editors, James O'Meara and J. H. Slater, and Governor Whiteaker.<sup>3</sup> The resolutions merely declared the Cincinnati platform of 1856 to be a true and satisfactory enunciation of the principles of the party. J. W. Drew, of Coos, moved to amend by adding, "as advocated and enunciated by Stephen A. Douglas." The motion was voted down, 60 to 4, which shows clearly the factional status of the Convention. Geo. K. Sheil, of Marion county, was nominated for Congressman. Stout was not considered for renomination—because, said the Statesman, he had been more faithful to the interests of the state than to those of Lane.

The Republicans met in convention April 19. The platform of the preceding year was adopted, with the omission of the Seward instructions.<sup>4</sup> T. J. Dryer, B. J. Pengra and W. H. Watkins were named for presidential electors. Col. Baker addressed the convention on invitation and was unanimously invited to stump the state in the coming canvass.

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<sup>1</sup> The incident is recorded by Davenport that during one of Col. Baker's greatest speeches in San Francisco, one of the reporters threw down his pencil, rushed bare-headed into the streets and gesticulating wildly, cried at the top of his voice, "Come in! Come in! The Old Man is talking like a God."

<sup>2</sup> Statesman, July 10.

<sup>3</sup> Proceedings, Union, April 24 and Statesman, April 24.

<sup>4</sup> Proceedings, Argus, April 28.

In 1857 and 1858 the differences between the Oregon Democrats had been largely local and factional. But by this time, while the personal element was not altogether obliterated, the schism in the party was a logical one; it was based on a principle and was national. On the one hand were the Douglas Democrats, led by Bush, stoutly maintaining the doctrine of popular sovereignty. On the other, the Administration Democrats, led by Lane, who held that slavery was protected in the Territories by the Constitution. The strife, occasioned by their differences, tended to increase the distance between them, and to lead each side to emphasize and exaggerate its own tenets. The result was that the Douglas men were becoming more conservative in their interpretation of the Dred Scott decision, approaching that held by the Republicans. The Administration Democrats had, on the other hand, taken a further step in the opposite direction and had now practically become interventionists of the Southern hue. In an editorial in April on "New Doctrine," Bush showed that, despite the fact that it was the settled law of the civilized world that human slavery was the creation of municipal law, by positive enactment, during the Buchanan administration, the doctrine had been advanced in the United States, stealthily, step by step, that slavery was a federal instead of a local institution. "It is assumed," he said, "that it had been so decided by the United States Supreme Court in the Dred Scott Decision. That that court may not so decide, when such question comes before it, no one is authorized to say. But it has not yet so decided. The only decision made by the Court was that a Negro could not bring a suit in a United States Court. The several opinions in addition comprised certain dicta, not possessed of the binding force of law."<sup>1</sup> One is inclined to question his eyes in reading from this source such a statement of the case which would have been considered adequate in any Republican newspaper in 1857. But nothing like this appeared in the Statesman in 1857 or 1858. It indicated the widening breach be-

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<sup>1</sup> Statesman, April 10.

tween the two Democratic wings. The bitter feeling between them was far more intense than between either of them and the Republicans.

The legislature which was to be chosen at the June election, would be called upon to elect two United States senators at its regular session in September. This fact gave direction to the political activities in the spring. Lane and Smith were the avowed and determined candidates of the radical Democrats and both the Douglas Democrats and the Republicans were stern in the resolution to defeat them. The two latter political divisions thus found themselves in more or less of an alliance. It was unconfessed for the most part and even often openly repudiated, especially by the Douglas men, who because of the alliance were called Mulattoes by the Lane forces. But where principles were similar and purposes the same, some unity of action was inevitable. It was all the more so because Col. Baker was an avowed popular sovereignty man, which rendered him at least inoffensive to the conservative Democrats.

The Republicans were now recognized as at least holding the balance of power between the warring Democratic factions and were in fact accused of alliance with each by the other. As early as November, 1859, Adams made light of the suggestion made by the Portland correspondent of the *Statesman* that the Lane forces and the Republicans would unite in the election of senators.<sup>1</sup> The *Portland Advertiser* predicted such fusion and called on Democrats to defeat such an "unholy alliance."<sup>2</sup> Such a suggestion was an implication against the honesty of purpose of the Republicans. Two years previous they had been in alliance with that faction of Oregon Democracy, the "Nationals" or "softs," which now for the most part comprised the Lane party. But no lines were drawn on national principles in that campaign as there were now in 1860. Indeed, a letter appeared in the *Argus*, March 31, 1860, dated at Yoncalla, signed "A" and evidently written by the old Roman, Jesse Applegate, strongly opposing the idea of coalition

<sup>1</sup> *Argus*, Nov. 12, 1859.

<sup>2</sup> Reported in *Statesman*, July 10, 1860.



with either Democratic wing. "I cannot see how it is possible the Republicans can with any consistency or without doing violence to their principles and forfeiting their self-respect, lend themselves to the base and dirty purposes of one faction of this corrupt party to help the other." He maintained that the Republican party was a party of principle, not price.

Nevertheless, there was a logical basis for an alliance between Republicans and Douglas men, and despite all protestations to the contrary, there was a certain unity of procedure between them. For example, in Marion county, the Douglas men or "Bushites" as they were termed by their Democratic opponents, nominated a legislative ticket and the Lane men did likewise. When the Republicans met in convention, they were advised by Baker not to nominate candidates but to support the Bush ticket. On arriving at a private understanding with the Douglas legislative nominees that they would support Baker for senator, Baker's advice was followed.<sup>1</sup> And this in the face of the fact that the Republicans were probably strong enough in Marion county to have elected their ticket. On the other hand in Washington and Yamhill counties, the anti-Lane Democrats did not nominate candidates, but supported for the most part those of the Republicans. A similar understanding, for the most part unconfessed, seemed to exist over the state.

But the most difficult and cleverly managed compromise between the Republicans and Douglas Democrats, and one which had the most far-reaching influence on the political events of the near future, was effected in Linn county, the home of the radical Democratic champion, "Delusion" Smith. In fact it proved the key to the situation. The facts were given the writer by a leading participant in the intrigue.<sup>2</sup> In March, Judge Williams, who was one of the Douglas candidates for senator, went to the Linn county residence of Smith and said to him: "Delazon, I have come here to beard the lion in his den. I am going to canvass Linn county and my object is to

<sup>1</sup> Davenport, pp. 347-351.

<sup>2</sup> Personal interview with W. R. Bishop.



beat you and General Lane for the Senate. Come on and make your fight."<sup>1</sup> Smith accepted the challenge and the two made a joint canvass of the county, fighting each other by day and generally sleeping in the same bed at night.<sup>2</sup> While in the county Williams cautiously broached the subject to his fellow Democrats of an alliance with the Republicans as the only means of defeating their pro-slavery opponents. Two efforts were made in this direction at mass meetings held at Albany, attended by both parties. But on both occasions, the Democrats avowed their Democracy and the Republicans their Republicanism so strenuously, the meetings ended in confusion and united action was despaired of. The abhorrence which many Democrats still cherished at any connection with Black Republicans, was hard to overcome. Finally an absolutely secret caucus of seventeen men was held for the purpose of making out a fusion ticket. Active Democrats in the caucus were Anderson Cox, W. R. Bishop, M. D. Byland and Harrison Johnson. John Conner was the leading Republican present, and was made chairman. In making up the legislative ticket, Bishop demanded that a rather illiterate Democrat named Barton Curl, from his part of the county, be named. Curl was a rabid Democrat and "offensively partisan" and was strenuously objected to by the Republicans. Bishop was insistent in his demand. He knew that Curl alone could carry the Democratic vote of the "Santiam forks," the hotbed of Democracy in that part of the state, and that vote would be essential for carrying the county. The Republicans yielded reluctantly. The conditions of alliance were clearly stated to be that the members of the legislative ticket, if elected, were to vote for Col. Baker and some Douglas Democrat for United States senators. The ticket was issued—the public knew not by whom nor whence. Four members of the legislature were to be chosen and three of the nominees on the fusion ticket were elected. One Lane-Smith nominee was successful by a

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<sup>1</sup> Williams' address before the legislature of 1899, in *Oregon Historical Quarterly* for March, 1907, p. 22.

<sup>2</sup> Conversation with Judge Williams.

majority of four votes, so close was the election. Barton Curl led the ticket. The judgment of Bishop was vindicated. Linn county had always been counted a Democratic stronghold and this revolution in his own county so weakened and discredited Smith that he was practically eliminated as a serious candidate for the United States senate.<sup>1</sup>

The hopes of both Lane and Smith were dashed by the general result of the election, by which the political complexion of the ensuing assembly was determined as follows: Lane Democrats, 19; Douglas Democrats, 18; Republicans, 13. Clackamas, Yamhill, Washington and Umpqua counties went solidly Republican. The Douglas ticket won in Marion; the Lane tickets for the most part in Lane, Polk, Benton, Jackson and Josephine. In other counties the results were divided. Sheil, the regular Democratic nominee for Congressman, was victorious over Logan by a majority of 103 votes. The Statesman took no notice of this part of the contest. There was no provision in the State Constitution for the choice of a Congressman at this time, and Bush maintained that the election was illegal and void—a mere political trick of the Lane Democrats. In fact it was electing a representative in Congress eighteen months before his term would begin.

While engrossed in the excitement of state politics, the Oregon politicians were at the same time keeping in close touch with national political affairs and were following the fortunes of the various aspirants for presidential nominations at the approaching national conventions. It is interesting to note who were some of the pre-convention favorites in Oregon. Among the Democrats, while Lane had received the official sanction as the candidate of the Oregon Democracy, it has been shown

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<sup>1</sup> Smith refused to consider himself eliminated, as indicated in the following, reprinted from his own paper the Democrat, of Albany, in the Argus, July 21, 1860. This quotation likewise furnishes an example, though somewhat an exaggerated one, of the license indulged in by the Oregon press during this factious period:

"Asohell Bush who runs the Salem smut machine, the club-footed loafer Beggs and Nesmith, the vilest and most loathsome creature that wears the human form on the Pacific Coast, are asserting that *We* are politically dead! Dead!! Never! Never!! No, Never!!! Let these cut-throats, assassins, murderers and their bastard vagabond allies in this county, put that in their pipes and smoke it!!!!"

that he was not really the choice of the Democrats of the state generally. Bush had early pronounced strongly for Douglas.<sup>1</sup> He said he was not of that number that believed or affected to believe that the dissolution of the Union would necessarily follow the election of a Black Republican as president, even were he W. H. Seward. But he did contend that the election of such a "violent sectionalist" would widen the breach between the North and South which might finally result in disunion. This led up to a fervid appeal for Douglas as the one man suitable to meet the crisis.<sup>2</sup> Adams stated that from his observations he had no doubt but that a large majority of Oregon Democrats favored the nomination of Douglas.<sup>3</sup> Even the Union, the Lane, anti-Clique organ, had admitted that, setting aside General Lane, Oregon would most likely favor Douglas and added, "And we are not prepared to say that he would not be the safest and most available candidate."<sup>4</sup> Daniel S. Dickinson was championed by Yamhill Democrats.

Among the Republicans, also, there were some decided views as to desirable candidates. In October, 1859, Adams declared his preference in a leader—"Edward Bates for President,"<sup>5</sup> and in following issues strongly supported the claims of the Missouri man. This drew out Editor Pengra of the Free Press, who had been responsible for the Seward resolution at the preceding state convention. In answer to Pengra, Adams said that if the editor of the Press had observed his own rule, "not to set up and defend the claims of any particular individual in preference to any others," he would not have introduced, particularly in the manner and at the time it was done, the Seward resolution of which a large majority of the

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<sup>1</sup> Statesman, Dec. 20, 1859.

<sup>2</sup> "What can be done to stay the destroying tide of blind fanaticism and insure beyond peradventure the perpetuity of our national institutions? Who can and will lead the hosts of Democracy to certain triumph in the approaching strife? Who but the gallant Democratic statesman and leader of the Northwest—the champion of popular sovereignty—the uncompromising advocate of the rights of all the states and the foe to sectionalism in any guise and in every quarter—*Stephen A. Douglas!*

<sup>3</sup> Argus, Nov. 5, 1859.

<sup>4</sup> Union, Nov. 12, 1859.

<sup>5</sup> Argus, Oct. 1, 1859.

delegates disapproved.<sup>1</sup> He said in effect that it gave their candidate, Logan, more trouble than anything else in the canvass and resulted in his defeat. "There are always some people," he added, "who can never 'let well enough alone,' and our party in Oregon has a few of that stamp." Adams maintained that no man in Oregon exceeded him in admiration of Seward as a statesman and patriot, but that he saw how difficult it would be to bring to the support of such a man, the masses with their varied and sectional ideas and interests. Dryer of the *Oregonian* expressed no choice of a presidential nominee.

The first expression for Lincoln was made in February, 1860. It was in a contributed article of some length, in the *Argus*, by Simeon Francis, a recent arrival from Illinois. He was the founder of the Springfield "*Illinois State Journal*" and had for twenty-five years been its editor. His approach to the subject was diplomatic—"Your views in regard to Edward Bates and your high appreciation of the man are my own. . . . The same facts I may say in regard to Abraham Lincoln."<sup>2</sup> There followed a sketch of Lincoln's life and career—of his long and consistent maintenance of Republican principles, the article closing with this tribute: "All these circumstances have placed Mr. Lincoln before his country and will place him before the convention as one of the men worthy of their high behest as a candidate for the first position in the world. He may attain that position. He may not. In either case, Abraham Lincoln will remain one of God's noblemen—noble in his nature, noble in his aims—a pure and great man." Shortly after this Francis succeeded Dryer as editor of the *Oregonian* and had the satisfaction of engaging actively in the campaign for the election of his candidate.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, Oct. 29.

"If Mr. Pengra had confined the expression of his preference to the sheet he edits it would have been all right; but when, after a convention had made arrangements to adjourn and half its members had left, supposing that nothing more would be done till the next session, he undertook to saddle his views upon the whole party, he did in our judgment a foolish, and as it proved, an injudicious thing."

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Feb. 11, 1860.

<sup>3</sup> H. L. Pittock became owner of the *Oregonian* in December, 1860, and in an editorial note announcing his departure for San Francisco to buy new materials, he said: "Mr. Francis will remain in charge of the paper as he has been for the last eight months."

The National Democratic Convention assembled April 23 at Charleston. The Oregon delegation as selected, consisted of Jos. Lane, Lansing Stout and M. P. Deady, with J. F. Miller, Indian agent, Gen. John Adair, collector at Astoria, and Gen. John K. Lamerick, as alternates. Not all of these attended and the Oregon delegates as present at Charleston, were Stout, Lamerick, Gov. I. I. Stevens of Washington Territory, R. B. Metcalf of Texas, a late Indian agent in Oregon, Justus Steinberger, former agent of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company in Oregon and A. P. Dennison, Indian agent.<sup>1</sup> When the split occurred in the convention on the adoption of the Douglas platform, the Oregon delegation did not withdraw with the pro-slavery seceders, though it had acted in harmony with them in the convention. However, it appears that they remained with the understanding that if Chairman Cushing's decision—to the effect that a two-thirds majority of all the delegates, including the bolters, was necessary to nominate—was revised, making possible the nomination of Douglas, they too would then withdraw. Lane was in Washington at this time and in answer to a telegram from Stout at Charleston asking for instructions, had sent word to withdraw with the seceding delegates by all means and stand by them.<sup>2</sup> In the same issue of the Statesman in which Bush published Lane's dispatch to Stout, in an editorial on "Lane and Disunion", he accused Lane of being a party to a preconcerted disunion movement. As evidence of the political company Lane associated with, he reproduced the famous "scarlet letter" of W. L. Yancey of Alabama to Jos. S. Sloughter, in which Yancey openly declared for a revolution on the part of the cotton states. Editorial correspondence was also quoted by Bush relative to a projected independent republic on the Pacific

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<sup>1</sup> Statesman, July 17.

<sup>2</sup> Lane's telegram was reprinted in the Statesman, July 3, from the Washington Star: "Hon. Lansing Stout: Your dispatch is received. Stand by the equality of the states and stand by those states that stand by the constitutional rights of all. By all means go with them—go out and stand by them. Joe Lane." The frequent use of the word "stand" in this message made it and Lane the butt of a great deal of fun and ridicule.



Coast, to further which, the Coast Democrats were to aid the South in dissolving the Union.

Not having actually withdrawn from the Charleston Convention, the Oregon delegation, headed by I. I. Stevens, appeared at the adjourned convention at Baltimore. Soon, however, according to the reported proceedings,<sup>1</sup> "Mr. Stevens of Washington Territory, in appropriate remarks, announced the withdrawal of the delegation from Oregon from the convention." The Oregon delegates entered the seceders' convention, which had likewise adjourned to Baltimore, and took part in the nomination of Breckinridge. An Oregon man was made one of the secretaries of the convention.<sup>2</sup> Little information is to be had as to the strength of the sentiment for Lane either at Charleston or Baltimore or as to the motives of the Democratic politicians in putting him forward at all. Amid the excitement and confusion arising from the great schism in the party, for once interest in men was overshadowed by interest in issues, and even the public press contained comparatively little of political gossip or comment of a personal nature. About all that the papers had to say of the vice presidential nominee with Breckinridge, as reported in the Oregon press, was found in the following paragraph of the proceedings:<sup>3</sup> "Mr. Greene of North Carolina nominated Joseph Lane of Oregon for vice president. Mr. Scott of California seconded the nomination with appropriate remarks. Mr. Adkins of Tennessee moved that Mr. Lane be nominated by acclamation. (Cries of No, No, No!) The roll was called—on the first ballot the whole 105 votes were cast for Joe Lane and he was declared nominated for vice president amidst deafening applause."

It is interesting to note that the head of the Oregon delegation at Baltimore, Gov. Stevens, was made chairman of the

<sup>1</sup> In *Statesman*, July 24 and *Union*, July 30.

<sup>2</sup> H. R. Crosbie, whose name appeared as Crotsney in the dispatches. Crosbie had taken Metcalf's place on the delegation. According to the *Statesman*, Sept. 11, he never was a resident of Oregon. Bush said he came out as a hanger-on to Gov. Davis, went to Wash. Ty. and then back to Washington, D. C., where Lane picked him up, put him on his "Oregon Delegation" and sent him "out to stand."

<sup>3</sup> *Union*, July 30.



National Democratic Central Committee, of the Southern wing, and managed the campaign for Breckinridge and Lane.<sup>1</sup> Of Oregon's representatives at Charleston and Baltimore, Gen. Stevens and Steinberger joined the Union cause, the former being killed in battle in 1862. Miller was the secession Democratic candidate for governor of Oregon in 1862. Lamerick became commissary of the Louisiana Confederate regiment and Metcalf a lieutenant in the Southern army.

In the meantime, the National Republican Convention had been held at Chicago. The delegates from Oregon, neither of whom were in attendance, had been authorized to appoint their own alternates. The *Argus* of March 31 spoke of the change of time of the Convention to May 16, one month earlier than it had been announced, saying it would cause inconvenience to the Oregon delegates, adding, "We learn that Leander Holmes, in consequence of his inability to attend, has empowered Horace Greeley to act in his stead and cast his vote for Edward Bates." As to the other alternates and whom they represented there is a little confusion. Frank Johnson of Oregon City, who was then studying theology in New York, was in attendance representing Oregon. It is generally understood that Joel Burlingame, father of Anson Burlingame and who had just returned East from Oregon, held a proxy at Chicago. This accounts for the number and yet Eli Thayer of Massachusetts, was credited with being a proxy delegate from Oregon.<sup>2</sup> Through Greeley, Oregon wielded a very potent and far-reaching influence at the Chicago Convention. This is clearly brought out in a very interesting letter from Johnson to the *Argus*, extracts of which follow:<sup>3</sup>

"The first hearty outburst of enthusiasm was on the announcement of Horace Greeley as member of the com-

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<sup>1</sup> *Statesman*, July 24.

"The Governor undertook the herculean task. In a single night he wrote the party address to the country—an address covering a whole page of a large metropolitan newspaper, a feat for which Gen. Lane years afterward expressed unbounded admiration and astonishment, both for its ability and for its ease and rapidity with which it was dashed off. During the next four months Gov. Stevens drove on the canvas with his accustomed energy and ability."—Hazard Stevens, "Life of Gen. Isaac I. Stevens", Vol. II., p. 305.

<sup>2</sup> *Statesman*, July 24.

<sup>3</sup> *Argus*, July 14.

mittee on platform and resolutions, from Oregon. It was received with universal applause and cries of 'When did you move?' It was felt that the greatest difficulty of the Convention would be to create a platform acceptable to all the classes represented. . . . The result is the most perfect and unequivocal statement of Republican faith ever written, the wisest and most diplomatic points of which, I think I am safe in saying, Oregon had the honor to contribute.

During the third ballot there was tolerable order until Oregon declared for Lincoln, rendering his nomination certain.<sup>1</sup> At this point the enthusiasm became irrepresible; the Wigwam was shaken with cheers from 23,000 Republicans, which were renewed as state after state declared its unanimous vote for 'the man who could split rails and maul Democrats.' "

Adams announced that Lincoln's nomination had been received all over Oregon with probably more enthusiasm than would have been that of any other man.<sup>2</sup> He held that the great mass of Oregon Republicans had favored Bates, as being the most available candidate, but that the enthusiasm of the convention for Lincoln had shown them their mistake. He paid a high tribute to Lincoln for his nobility of character, his purity of purpose and his lack of demagogism, asserting that "Abraham Lincoln stands up to-day as the best known representative of Republicanism in the Union." The pugnacious "Parson" closed with the aggressive prediction—"If he is elected, he will take his seat, unless assassinated, and rule this government, in spite of all the Union-threatening Democratic traitors this side of the lake of fire and brimstone."

When the result of the National Democratic Conventions became known in Oregon, Bush promptly entered the name of Douglas in the Statesman as the regular Democratic nominee and at the same time renewed the attack on Republicanism which he had for some time ignored while waging war against

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<sup>1</sup> Not absolutely certain. Oregon's change to Lincoln gave him 231 1-2 votes, within 1 1-2 votes of the nomination. Another state then corrected the vote, giving Lincoln 4 more and nominating him by a margin of 2 1-2 votes. Previous to its switch to Lincoln, the Oregon delegation had been voting for Bates.

<sup>2</sup> Argus, July 14.

the pro-slavery Democrats.<sup>1</sup> He did not cease his attacks on the latter. He now made a double attack. He pleaded eloquently with all Democrats to come up to the support of "Douglas and the Union" and referred to the speeches of the Southern agitators as containing "as damnable treason as ever fell from the lips of the wildest abolition fanatic that disgraces the North."<sup>2</sup> In commenting upon the assertion made by the Portland Advertiser that the Republicans were shouting "Hurrah for Joe Lane," Bush said, "We have noticed this somewhat remarkable sympathy with the Yancey bolters on the part of the Republicans. We account for it on the score of sympathy with kindred sectionalism." He could not find language too vituperative to apply to Buchanan for deserting Douglas,<sup>3</sup> which language reads strangely when compared with the laudatory words Bush had for Buchanan only two short years before.

The Democratic State Central committee met at Eugene, August 18. R. E. Stratton, declaring that a division and separation of the committee was inevitable and that the issue might just as well be drawn at once, introduced a resolution declaring for Douglas and Johnson as the regular Democratic nominees.<sup>4</sup> Delazon Smith moved to amend by substituting the names of Breckinridge and Lane. A full discussion followed. Smith favored leaving the question open until the meeting of the state convention, which the committee was to call for the purpose of nominating presidential electors, and in the meantime having the Democrats of the state in their primary meetings determine upon the action to be taken. He further suggested that the committee recommend that the convention name one ticket, made up from both divisions of the party. Stratton, maintaining that there was no hope of concerted action, pressed his resolution, with the amendment of Smith,

<sup>1</sup> Statesman, July 24.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., July 31.

<sup>3</sup> In an editorial, Aug. 21, on "The Blackest of Treason", the following expressions are found: "Buchanan will be remembered with ineffable hate and scorn. . . The black hearted and infamous treason of Jas. B. . . His corrupt heart has hatched this egg of treason. . . Jas. B., reeking with corruption and treason and rankling with malice and hate . . . The name of Jas. B., will like Arnold and Iscariot, be the synonym of treachery and infamy."

<sup>4</sup> Proceedings in Union, Aug. 21.

to a vote. The amendment was sustained by a vote of 9 to 6, whereupon the Douglas men withdrew. The committee then issued a call for a state convention to be held at Eugene, September 18, to nominate three presidential electors and to ratify the platform adopted by the Breckinridge Convention at Baltimore. The Douglas members of the central committee also issued a call for a state convention to be held at Eugene on September 19.<sup>1</sup>

The Breckinridge convention, after endorsing Breckinridge and Lane and the platform they stood upon, reiterated allegiance to the National platform of 1856 as interpreted by that of 1860, as the only proper solution of the question of slavery in the Territories; deprecated the "blatant, unprincipled calumniations of the present national administration;" declared undiminished confidence in "our esteemed Hero-Citizen", Lane, the true hero of Buena Vista. The sixth and seventh planks expressed the attitude and spirit of the convention toward the other two parties. The sixth—"That we are unalterably opposed to the unconstitutional 'irrepressible conflict' doctrines of the sectional, Black Republican, abolitionized party, which placed the Negro-equality Lincoln in nomination for the Presidency." The seventh declared want of confidence in the Douglas Democratic leaders of the state and declared themselves to "heartily despise and loathe the vile treason, the gross personalities and the hypocritical teachings of the Oregon Statesman and those who furnish the Judas material for its weekly issues." For presidential electors, Delazon Smith, James O'Meara and D. W. Douthitt, were named. Before adjourning, the convention empowered the central committee to act as a conference committee to confer with any committee that might be appointed by the Douglas convention for the purpose of effecting conciliation.

But the Douglas Democrats, who met on the following day

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<sup>1</sup> Statesman, Aug. 28.  
Proceedings in Union, Sep. 22.

in convention, manifested no desire for reconciliation.<sup>1</sup> Their uncompromising attitude was expressed in the resolution which endorsed the principle of non-intervention, "as the same was understood in 1848 when Gen. Cass was the Democratic nominee for the Presidency; as the same was understood in 1852 when Gen. Pierce was the Democratic nominee; as it was understood in 1856 when James Buchanan was the Democratic nominee; and as affirmed, re-affirmed, endorsed and re-endorsed by every state and national convention and every Democratic leader and statesman for the past twelve years." Douglas and Johnson were endorsed and their platform cordially approved. The following were nominated for electors: W. H. Farrar, Benj. Hayden, Wm. Hoffman:<sup>2</sup>

The legislature had met September 10, with all attention centered on the election of United States senators. In an editorial upon the subject the week before, Bush argued that the next United States Senate would contain about an equal number, 30, of intervention Democrats for slavery and intervention Republicans against, and that the safety of the Union in restricting the conflict between them lay in the small band of non-intervention Democrats who held the balance of power. Therefore, he maintained that it was important to send two non-intervention senators from Oregon, especially as Oregon had always occupied that ground. Note that Bush did not expressly demand that both senators should be Democrats. In fact he tacitly admitted that they would not be when he expressed the hope that no overtures for a compromise would be entertained which looked to the election of anyone not pledged strictly to non-intervention.<sup>3</sup> This drew the fire of the Union, which declared that "Never was treason more foul." It asserted that the Statesman proprietor had grown immensely rich by favors bestowed on him by the party and that now, "in the hour of its peril, he spurns it away and flippantly talks of electing two

<sup>1</sup> "The Convention manifested no disposition to compromise present divisions for the sake of carrying the state against the Republicans beyond peradventure, but persisted in a spirit of blind infatuation known only to those who are goaded to desperation."—Union, Sep. 22.

<sup>2</sup> Proceedings in Statesman, Sep. 25.

<sup>3</sup> Statesman, Sept. 4.



United States senators without reference to political complexion. The mask has fallen and behold, men of Oregon, the loathsome mess it concealed."

The anti-Lane faction was victorious in the organization of the Assembly, B. F. Harding of Marion being elected speaker of the house and Luther Elkins of Linn, president of the senate. To prevent a quorum in the latter, six of the Lane-Smith members withdrew and went into hiding, their purpose being to make impossible the election of senators unsatisfactory to their faction. In fact it was asserted by the Breckinridge Democrats that no legislation should take place until Delazon Smith was elected senator, his term having expired before Lane's. Warrants were issued for the arrest of the absconding senators but they could not be found. The two Democratic conventions were in session at Eugene at this time. The Breckinridge convention heartily endorsed the action of the six senators as "preventing the consummation of a gross and infamous fraud upon the Democratic masses of this state by the accomplishment of the election of a Black Republican to the Senate of the United States, as the fruit of a corrupt and infamous secret coalition." The Douglas convention referred to the abscondence as "part and parcel of that great revolutionary scheme initiated by those who seceded from the National Democratic convention."

After unsuccessful balloting for United States senators, the legislature adjourned. Gov. Whiteaker, though a strong partisan of the Breckinridge faction, issued an appeal to the absent senators to return to their seats, which they did on September 24. They were censured by the senate, in a vote of 8 to 7. The result of the first ballot after the re-assembling of the legislature, taken October 1, was: For the long term—Nesmith 16, Smith 19, Baker 12, Williams 2, Curry 1. For the short term—Grover 17, Williams 11, Holbrook 11, Curry 7, Drew 2. After ten ineffective ballots, adjournment was made until the following day. On the fourth ballot of the next day, the vote stood: Long term—Deady 22, Nesmith 27; short



term—Baker 26, Williams 20. Twenty-six votes were necessary to elect. Oregon had chosen as her United States senators, J. W. Nesmith, a Douglas Democrat, and Col. E. D. Baker, a Republican. The first step in the political revolution of 1860 had been taken.

The contest had been a long and complicated one. The Douglas Democrats were reluctant to vote for even so conservative a Republican as Baker, and held out in the hope of effecting some satisfactory compromise with their factional opponents. But they refused absolutely to vote for Smith of the other side and were as insistent on the election of their own candidate, Nesmith. But the Breckinridge party steadfastly refused to support Nesmith unless Smith were made the other senator. Compromise was thus impossible. These conditions were set forth in an address issued by the fifteen Democrats who voted for Baker, explaining their action.<sup>1</sup> They contended that it was better to combine with the Republicans than have no senators at all, especially as Baker was a non-interventionist who really differed but little from them in his views and would make Oregon a worthy senator.<sup>2</sup>

The Democratic press was practically a unit in denouncing the coalition, but the Statesman defended it, hurling defiance at "the Yanceyites," upon whom it threw the burden of responsibility because of their determination to elect disunionists to the Senate.<sup>3</sup> The Republican press was jubilant. "Glorious Result," was the caption of the article in the Argus, October 6, announcing the "glorious news." Adams made the first open, unreserved public reference to the means by which it was accomplished when he said—"The combination by which it was effected was made by the people in June and has been honorably and fairly carried out by their representatives." He had a good word for Nesmith—the first ever seen in the Argus

<sup>1</sup> Statesman, Oct. 8.

<sup>2</sup> In his correspondence dated Nov. 1, 1863, to the San Francisco Bulletin, M. P. Deady maintained that Baker owed more to the existence of the Oregon Indian war debt for his election, than had ever been told; that those who held war scrip, concluding that it would be necessary to have an advocate on the Republican side of Congress before an appropriation would be made for the payment of the debt, lent a potent influence in favor of Baker.

<sup>3</sup> Statesman, Oct. 5.

for a Democrat and which was eloquent of the spiritual exaltation of the combative "Parson" over the result. In speaking of "Our Republican Senator, Col. Baker," he was effervescent. Salem correspondence in the *Argus*, signed "A. H." deprecated the action of the *Oregonian* and the *Statesman* in "toning down" Baker's Republicanism and imputing to him some of the heresies of Douglas in order to justify the actions of the Democrats who voted for him.<sup>1</sup> But this correspondent was evidently one Amory Holbrook, who, having political aspirations of his own, was jealous of Baker. As a member of the legislature he had refused to vote for the Colonel, and his defection had almost been fatal to the Republican cause he professed to support.

A few weeks later Adams noted that "a sudden anguish has seized hold of a speckled herd of politicians that expresses itself in groanings that evince the most extreme agony."<sup>2</sup> He took such from the disunion Democrats as a matter of course. But in reference to "a weak echo" from a few Douglas organs, he stated plainly that the fusion in June had been made with the distinct purpose which had been embodied in the election; that some coalition was absolutely necessary to election and the one which took place was the only logical and honorable one. In reply to the charge made against Baker that he was a new comer, Adams answered that he came voluntarily to locate permanently and already had a national reputation, which "isn't like electing a newcomer that nobody knows anything about—a second-rate, jack-leg lawyer, that may turn out to be a tool of some disunion scoundrel as your man Stout has done." The *Oregonian*, now edited by Francis, had taken the same position, but expressed it in more temperate language.<sup>3</sup> Great satisfaction was expressed at the removal of the Lane incubus and honor was done to the men who achieved it.<sup>4</sup> The *People's Press*, the other Republican paper in the state,

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<sup>1</sup> *Argus*, Oct. 13.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Oct. 20.

<sup>3</sup> *Oregonian*, Sep. 29.

<sup>4</sup> *Oregonian*, Sep. 29.

joined the Argus and Oregonian in the jubilant expression of satisfaction over the result.

Reports appeared in the press that the joyous Republicans of the state held celebrations of the victory—that in some cases one hundred guns were fired in “glorification” on receipt of the news of Baker’s election. But even then they could not know the significance of what had taken place. This senatorial election takes a highly important place in the political history of this very critical period, both locally and nationally. Locally, it marked the complete disruption of the Oregon Democracy and paved the way for the Union movement in Oregon which was effected in 1862. Nationally, it sent a man in E. D. Baker to the United States Senate, who, by his impassioned oratory and inspiring personal example, strengthened the whole country with an answering thrill of loyalty and a determination to meet bravely the crisis of the nation.

With the senatorial question settled, renewed attention was given the approaching presidential election. The Statesman labored aggressively for Douglas, and as the campaign advanced, had much more to say against Breckinridge than against Lincoln, though by no means countenancing Republicanism. Bush addressed a special appeal to the supporters of Bell and Everett, to be true to their name of “Constitutional Union party” by voting for Douglas and by not throwing away their votes and helping to give Oregon to one of the sectional parties.<sup>1</sup> To the “Southern Men” he urged that Douglas maintained the *old* Democratic doctrine that the people of the Territories should regulate their domestic institutions in their own way, while Lincoln and Breckinridge, “twin brothers on intervention,” declared that Congress should regulate for them.<sup>2</sup>

The Union was equally energetic and violent in behalf of Breckinridge and Lane, begging Democrats not to throw away votes on Douglas, but to vote for Breckinridge to defeat Lincoln and save the Union. A greater number of the Democratic

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<sup>1</sup> Statesman, Oct. 29.

<sup>2</sup> Statesman, Nov. 5.

papers of the state supported the Breckinridge than the Douglas ticket.<sup>1</sup> In the East, as the campaign advanced, it seemed at least entirely possible that no candidate would have a majority of the electoral votes, which, according to the Constitution, would throw the election of President into the lower house of Congress. But according to the political complexion of that body, an election would apparently still be impossible. The election of vice president would be in the hands of the Senate, where it was thought the Southern Democrats would be strong enough to elect their candidate Lane, who would thus become President of the United States, the house having failed to choose a chief executive. In view of the fact that the hope for such a denouement became prevalent among Eastern Democrats, as a last resort for defeating Lincoln, it is rather surprising that no reflection of this purpose is seen during the campaign in Lane's own state.

The Republican press hewed to the line for Lincoln, attacking with equal vigor the pretensions of the two Democratic parties. As usual, "Parson" Adams furnished the most striking and picturesque illustrations of the Republican attitude. "Fight on, ye mercenary hounds," was his encouraging word to the Democratic factions. They were cheerfully informed that while they were telling the truth about each other and proving their unfitness for future trusts, the people were looking upon their discomfiture with indifference as to who might prove the victor. "Have at you then, ye bullying Disunionists and ye time-serving Dough-faces! We need not the cowardly threats of one or the servile whinings of the other."<sup>2</sup> In an editorial on "Disunionism", he said: "The Douglas organs are making a terrible hulla-baloo about the Disunionism of the Breckinridge party. This is all very well as their charges are true, and being true, it ought to damn every Disunion tool in the country. But then we can see no great difference in the two

<sup>1</sup> Among the papers supporting Breckinridge, were the Union, Oregon Democrat, Jacksonville Sentinel, Eugene Herald, Roseburg Express and Portland Daily News; supporting Douglas, were the Statesman, Portland Times, Portland Advertiser and The Dalles Mountaineer.

<sup>2</sup> Argus editorial, Sept. 29—"When Thieves Fall Out, Honest Men Get Their Dues."

factions on this score. While Douglas is a professed friend of the Union, his colleague Johnson is as rabid a Disunionist as Yancey."<sup>1</sup>

This attitude seems rather strange, considering the successful coalition which had just taken place between the Douglas Democrats and the Republicans in the election of United States senators. The *Argus* was evidently determined to impress those wavering voters, who were loyal to the Union, with the necessity of supporting Lincoln. To make it easy for such to support the Republican ticket, an attempt had been made during the recent session of the legislature to repeal the Viva Voce ballot law, passed during the troublous times of the Know Nothings, and to substitute the secret ballot. A bill to this effect was carried in the house by a vote of 18 to 12, the Republicans and the Bush, or old organization Democrats, supporting it, the Breckinridge Democrats opposing.<sup>2</sup> The Salem correspondent to the Union made this comment: "There is, however, this gratification—that this measure, intended to cover up the tracks of the Bushites in voting, as they intend to do for Lincoln, cannot pass the senate. Notwithstanding the impotent howling of the Clique organ, there is Democracy enough here to kill it, so that after all, the coalitionists only show their cloven feet, without realizing any advantage." The prophecy proved correct, as the measure was lost in a tie vote in the senate. It is diverting to see the old organization Democrats attempting to withdraw from their own noose which they had tied to catch Know Nothings with, while those members who as National Democrats had so vehemently denounced the Viva Voce law, now upheld it just as strenuously.<sup>3</sup>

On November 6, Oregon gave Lincoln a plurality of 270 votes over the Democratic candidates and the political revolution of 1860 was complete. The candidates were voted for as

<sup>1</sup> Union, Oct. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., Oct. 20.

<sup>3</sup> Two "notables" remained consistent—one on each side. Col. J. K. Kelly of Clackamas, an old National, and now a Lane Democrat, voted for the repeal, while Bush, who had championed the Viva Voce law, was, according to his own statement (*Statesman*, Nov. 5) opposed to its repeal.

follows: Lincoln, 5344; Breckinridge, 5074; Douglas, 4131; Bell, 212.<sup>1</sup> The relative strength of the Democratic candidates was a surprise, and in this connection it is significant that Oregon was the only northern state which gave a larger vote for Breckinridge than for Douglas.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Official returns in *Statesman*, Dec. 3. For vote by counties, see Appendix II. A. J. Thayer, who had been nominated by the Douglas State central committee, October 17, for Congressman, received 4099 votes. He had no opposition, as the Breckinridge Democrats agreed to ignore the election, claiming it to be as illegal as that of Sheil in June. Thayer was seated as a member of Congress, July 4, 1861 (Congressional proceedings in *Argus*, July 27) but the matter was taken up and reconsidered July 26, when Thayer was removed and Sheil seated. (Congressional proceedings in *Union*, Sep. 9, 1861).

<sup>2</sup> Judson, *Fiftieth Anniversary Proceedings*, p. 45.



## Chapter XI

### TREASON, STRATEGEMS AND SPOILS (1860-1861)

Governor Whiteaker, in his message to the legislature in September, 1860, referred to the "mental war" being waged all over the Union, "probably with as much virulence in Oregon as in any other of the States." Deprecating the charges and counter charges of disunion and treasonable sentiments, he doubted there being two men in the state who would not prefer the integrity of the Union with the certainty that their peculiar political views would never be adopted, to disunion with certain success in the division within which they might chance to fall. He therefore held it unnecessary and inadvisable for conservative men to enter into this war of words. This was the view of the situation, at least professed, as held by an irrecconcilable, pro-slavery Democrat of the Southern school.<sup>1</sup> In reply, Bush said: "We don't see how Governor Whiteaker can arrive at such conclusions with his eyes and ears open. We believe that two-fifths of all the men in Oregon who are supporting Breckinridge would prefer disunion, on such conditions; and that full one fifth would look with complacency on disunion in any event."<sup>2</sup>

Judging merely from the expression of the Democratic press immediately after the election of Lincoln, in regard to the current threats of secession, Whiteaker was nearer right than Bush. The Oregon Weekly Union, the staunch Breckinridge and Lane organ, while lamenting sorely the result of the election, and denouncing both Republicans and Douglas Democrats as blameworthy for the troublous times which were threatened, came out strongly against secession at once. In a two-column editorial on "Nullification," November 24, it stated emphatically that there was no way whereby a state might

<sup>1</sup> "Old Whit" is a good specimen of a sturdy, frontier farmer man, formed of a cross between Illinois and Missouri, with a remote dash of something farther Down East. Although wrong in the head in politics, he is honest and right in the heart.—Deady, Oct. 13, 1862, to San Francisco Bulletin.

<sup>2</sup> Statesman, Oct. 1, 1860.

resume the power relinquished to the Federal Government in the bond of Union, or prevent the enforcement of the laws passed by Congress, but by open, undisguised revolution. It might be called nullification, secession or an "irrepressible conflict," yet it was none the less revolution. It might be peaceable and without bloodshed, but still it would be revolution. It might come from resistance to laws providing for raising a revenue or for the return of fugitive slaves—from resistance in South Carolina or in Massachusetts, it would be revolution and if carried so far as to result in armed resistance it might truthfully be denominated as treason. At the same time, the Union could not forbear taking the North to task for inconsistency, pointing out that it was treason to nullify the laws of Congress in South Carolina, but in Massachusetts it was quite a different thing. In the one place it suggested a halter and a gallows while in the other it was commended and gloried in.

In the next issue, December 1, the Union expressed itself still more strongly. It declared that resistance to Lincoln as a candidate was one thing and resistance to him as President was quite another. "Therefore, while in common with Northern Democracy we resisted, and still resist the aggressions of Republicanism on the South, we have no sympathy with any scheme of disloyalty to the Union. And while we will not desist from exposing the causes which have led to these unhappy results and will continue to place the responsibility where it belongs, we disclaim for ourselves and the Democracy of Oregon, any sympathy or affiliation with the secession of any of the states; and warn them, that, if carried so far as to result in resistance to the laws of the Federal Union, it must be put down with all the power of the government. And in this, they will find the North united as one man in support of the government, no matter who is President." The Union has been quoted at some length to show clearly the uncompromising attitude of the Southern press in Oregon before secession became an accomplished fact.

But during the next few months the Union receded from its high ground, devoting most of its space to "exposing the

causes which have led to these unhappy results",—the most pleasureable part of the mission to which it had committed itself. Northern fanatics were denounced and the South tacitly exonerated. A kind of bogie man was made of "Coercion," which was declared to be a very different thing from executing the federal laws against the individual citizens of a state.<sup>1</sup> The Oregon Democrat, assuming even more advanced ground, made a distinction between nullification and secession, holding that while the former was wrong and monstrous, secession was eminently right and proper.<sup>2</sup> While very few Democratic papers in Oregon made so free and open confession of faith as this, the attitude which they for the most part generally assumed was expressive of such conviction.

By May, Slater of the Union was advising Oregon to assume a neutral ground in the struggle. In an editorial, "What Will the Pacific States Do?" he went no farther than to "presume" that Oregon and California were loyal, and he would not favor any scheme looking to their severance from the Union, "unless, in the progress of the general conflagration, some such step should become absolutely necessary for self-preservation." He maintained that as the war was not against a foreign nation, the people of the Pacific Coast should assume neutral ground and refuse to be involved in "this general melee which politicians have kicked up over the mountains."<sup>3</sup> "There is high blood in Oregon as well as elsewhere, and it will be well for all concerned to keep quiet and cool," admonished Slater. He continued to make perfunctory professions of loyalty, but took no position in favor of maintaining the Union. In an editorial on "Where We Stand," he failed to give the information indicated. While protesting that he acknowledged no flag but that of the Union, he avowed unalterable opposition to any policy which looked toward waging a war of subjugation on the South.<sup>4</sup> This harmonizes not at all with his fulsome declaration of December first.

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<sup>1</sup> Union, Feb. 2, 1861.

<sup>2</sup> Argus, Jan. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Union, May 4.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., May 18.

There was a notable exception to this general negative attitude of the Democratic press. As the movement toward secession developed, after Lincoln's election, the Statesman was far more vigorous and radical in demanding that the government put down the rebellion promptly by force of arms and hang the rebels, than was either the Argus or Oregonian. The latter, as Administration organs, were cautious, desiring rather to follow and support Lincoln's policy, when it should become known, than to take the initiative by advocating those of their own which might prove embarrassing in being out of harmony with that adopted at Washington. This attitude of the Republican press is well exemplified in an Oregonian editorial—"The Union—Can it be Preserved?"<sup>1</sup> "We are not disposed," said Francis, "to discuss at this time, the right of secession. Nor are we prepared to express an opinion as to the propriety of a resort to force to compel seceding states to remain in the Union, against their will and consent." Greeley of the Tribune was quoted with approval to the effect that he was opposed to a Union "which had to be pinned together with the bayonet," and that "if they were determined to go, let them go in peace." Bush *was* prepared to express an opinion and as usual expressed it with unfailing vigor, urging the new Administration to adopt prompt and heroic measures for ruthlessly crushing out the rebellion and dealing summarily with the traitors. He wasted no time on fine distinctions between nullification and secession, between enforcing United States laws and coercion.

His term as senator having expired, Lane arrived in Oregon once more, the last of April. But he had never before experienced such a home coming. It was an unfortunate coincidence for him that at the very time of his arrival, came the news of the firing upon Fort Sumpter. There was no longer any doubt that the man whom Oregon had long delighted to honor was a secessionist. Not only had his public actions so declared him, but personal letters written to Southern friends

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<sup>1</sup> Oregonian, Jan. 12.

commending secession had appeared in the Southern press and had found their way into Oregon papers.<sup>1</sup> His reception was sullen and ominous. On his arrival at Dallas on his way home to the southern part of the state, the people raised the Stars and Stripes, fired a salute of thirty-four guns for the Union and hung Lane in effigy.<sup>2</sup> It was pretty generally admitted by this time that a movement, more or less tangible, was on foot for establishing a Pacific Coast Republic and it was believed by very many, as had been charged, that Lane had come home for the purpose of aiding in the conspiracy to that end.<sup>3</sup>

There was nothing new in the idea suggested of an independent government on the Pacific Coast. In 1855, the Standard had seriously questioned whether Oregon would not be better off under such a government than under that of the United States. It held that the Rocky Mountains presented an unmistakable boundary, and that such boundaries, laid by an over-ruling Providence, ought to be more strictly regarded.<sup>4</sup> Positive assertions concerning schemes of disunion and the setting up of a new Western republic, appeared in the press the same year.<sup>5</sup> In July, 1860, Bush declared it to be stated on authority, considered reliable that the Pacific Delegation in Congress had held a caucus and resolved to favor disunion and the formation of three separate republics—the North, South and Pacific. That this insane project was entertained by some ambitious and designing politicians, he declared there could be no doubt, and indicated that Lane was implicated.<sup>6</sup> The Oregonian, January 26, 1861, had published a letter written by

<sup>1</sup> "I am glad a majority of the people of Oregon have determined to leave a Union that refuses you equality and protection. *You are right*: and I am sure that you will take no step backwards".—Lane, Jan. 6, 1861, to a Southern friend, printed in Georgia Constitutionalist and reprinted in Statesman, Feb. 25.

"You are right and I am with you heart and soul. . . . I, with thousands of good Northern men, will be by their [the Southern States] side".—Lane, Dec. 14, 1860, to a Georgia relative, printed in Columbus, Ga., Times, and reprinted in Oregonian, March 2, 1861.

<sup>2</sup> Argus, May 11.

<sup>3</sup> "It is said here that 'Joseph' goes to Oregon early in next month for the purpose of inaugurating the Pacific Republic and I am inclined to think that that is his object."—Senator Nesmith, Washington, D. C., Feb. 26, 1861, to Harvey Gordon, Salem.

<sup>4</sup> Standard editorial "Our Future", quoted in Oregonian, July 28, 1855.

<sup>5</sup> Statesman, Sep. 8, 1855.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., July 24, 1860.



Burch, a California Congressman, which had been made public, in which was argued the wisdom of a Pacific Republic.

There could be no doubt that such a project was considered and it was a very reasonable assumption, to say the least, that Lane was connected with it. But whatever his plans were for procedure in Oregon,<sup>1</sup> he found it necessary on arrival to placate the public sentiment, unmistakable evidence of which greeted him on every hand. He began to extol the "Union and the Constitution" as he mingled with the people with his familiar and effusive "God bless you" greeting. He made a short speech at Corvallis on the national situation and the Union said that many were surprised to find that instead of being a disunionist and a secessionist, Gen. Lane was a strong Union man and unequivocally opposed to any move towards the separate independence of the Pacific.<sup>2</sup> It had been noticeable in the weeks previous, the Union had been very silent as to Lane's attitude as exhibited in the East. This drew forth the retort from Adams that Lane hoped by blarney and a great show of patriotism to reunite the Democracy and get himself elected as governor and a disunion representative in Congress. "That being done, his Union garments will be thrown off, and, like the wardrobe of a circus-rider, his old dirty rags of treason will be discovered to have grown fast to his hide."<sup>3</sup> The Union soon gave color to the above charge when in a long editorial it pleaded, almost agonizingly, for a union of the Democracy. Let by-gones be by-gones with the two wings—get together and stop the inroads which the Republicans are making in the Democratic ranks—was the burden of its exhortation.

Within a month after the fall of Sumpter, Union Clubs were being organized in Oregon. Immediately on receipt of the news from South Carolina a large and enthusiastic Union mass

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<sup>1</sup> On the way south by wagon, Lane accidentally shot himself. About November first the Oregon Democrat reported with regret that he was recovering but slowly from the effect of the unfortunate accident. This prompted the Statesman, Nov. 11, to say: "He received this shot in lifting a box containing arms which he brought home with him in considerable quantity, it is generally believed, with the design of arming a company of men to secede the state, and many persons do not regard that shot so unfortunate as it might have been."

<sup>3</sup> Argus, May 18.



meeting was held at Portland in the Willamette theater.<sup>1</sup> Stirring speeches were made by Dr. A. G. Henry of Yamhill, and by J. H. Mitchell and Geo. B. Currey of Portland. The Portland Times said that as the last speaker left the stand, a sudden removal or change of the scenery at the rear of the stage exposed to view the unfurled banner of the Union—and, as if by electricity, the audience arose to their feet in enthusiastic cheers for the flag. It is significant that one of the very first Union Clubs to be started in Oregon was organized in a settlement of foreign citizens, at Aurora, May 17. Dr. Wm. Keil, a native Prussian, had established a German settlement in this section of Marion county in 1855.<sup>2</sup> Dr. Keil addressed the meeting along with others. Ringing resolutions were passed pledging heartiest support of the Government "against all foes from without or traitors within."<sup>3</sup> A strong club was organized and Union sentiment ran high. "The German brass band enlivened the exercises by playing national airs in their best style." What took place at Aurora was soon taking place over the state.

This general manifestation of Union sentiment brought to light the real animus of the majority of the Democratic papers and the Southern Democrats generally, most of whom had been protesting their loyalty in a negative sort of way. Slater belittled and scoffed at the Union meetings, branding them as a mere scheme of designing politicians to deceive the people into the embrace of Republicanism under the cloak of an effort to save the Union.<sup>4</sup> "As might be expected," said the Oregonian, "the Advertiser<sup>5</sup> opposes the formation of Union Clubs. While secessionists are plotting treason everywhere, while the Knights of the Golden Circle are carrying on their murderous and cowardly schemes, while bloody treason stalks red-handed

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<sup>1</sup> Argus, May 11.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Keil made the settlement as a practical test of his communistic theories. Aurora became the Republican stronghold of Marion county and a center of Union sentiment.

<sup>3</sup> Argus, May 25.

<sup>4</sup> Union, May 25.

<sup>5</sup> The Portland Advertiser, edited by Ex-Governor Curry, had pronounced most emphatically for the integrity of the Union, but like the Corvallis Union, had suffered a relapse.

through the land, are the friends of the Union to take advice from its enemies and forbear to use a harmless precaution?" Flag raisings were opposed by the Southern sympathizers as tending to fan animosities and incite sectional enmities. Violence was threatened in some cases if the determination to raise the Stars and Stripes were persisted in. Adams claimed to believe that nine-tenths of those opposing Union meetings and flag raisings, did so, not from disloyalty to the government, but from a silly belief that they were Republican demonstrations; that in this belief they were encouraged by the leaders of secession in Oregon. He stated that in passing through the country he found that all the Douglas Democrats and nine-tenths of the Breckinridge Democrats were loyal and opposed the efforts of secession organs to make party capital out of national troubles, while they lauded the patriotic position of the *Statesman* and *Portland Times*. But Adams' estimate was evidently like election forecasts—given for a purpose.

On May 28, Gov. Whiteaker issued a long address to the people of Oregon on the situation, in which, while professing loyalty to the Union, he took strong grounds against Union meetings and disapproved the war.<sup>1</sup> The following sentences from the message are of no little significance, coming as they did with the official sanction of the state government: "These are not Union meetings, but are creating disunion directly in our midst. . . . I suspect that there is about as much patriotism to be found among those who have no anathemas for any portion of the country—even if they do not think the Union can be preserved by the sword, as in the hearts of those who cry havoc and blood at every breath. . . . In God's name what good is this war to bring the country? None; positively none." The weight of the official sanction, however, was not sufficient to deter the militant "Parson" from branding "poor fiddling Whiteaker or 'Old Cat-Gut'" as "the biggest ass in the state" and "at heart as rotten a traitor as Jeff Davis."<sup>2</sup>

The attitude of Oregon's Southern Democracy is exemplified

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<sup>1</sup> Union, June 8.

<sup>2</sup> Argus, June 8.

in the resolutions passed at a mass meeting of the Democracy of Linn county, June 5. "Loyalty to the Union—the whole Union," was avowed. Association with secessionists and traitors was disavowed, and sectionalists or violators of the Constitution were discountenanced. The idea of a Pacific Republic was opposed as visionary and dangerous. At the same time it was asserted that the Government could be maintained only by a spirit of conciliation and compromise; that coercion was but another name for war and was disunion. Therefore, opposition to the war and the war policy of the Administration, was announced.<sup>1</sup> Slater heralded this meeting as a great success in every way, while casting slurs on the numerous Union meetings. The Democratic organs referred to the war as "Lincoln's war" and denounced him as a usurper, revolutionist, monarchist and tyrant. The Union was replete with such expressions as "Lincoln's rump Congress," "Greeley's abolition war," "The banquet of blood" (Bull Run) and "Lincoln I." It could not conceal its exultation over the defeat at Bull Run, saying that the rout was complete and total and the victory on the part of the South one that they might well be proud of. In the issue of August 26 appeared the message of Jefferson Davis. By this time the secession odor of "The Onion," as Bush called it, was sufficiently strong to discount its loudest protestations of loyalty.

Senator Baker, having eloquently championed the Union cause on the floor of the United States senate, volunteered his services on the outbreak of the rebellion and was given a command. On October 21 he was killed at the head of his men at the battle of Balls Bluff. In appointing a successor to Oregon's Republican senator, Gov. Whiteaker further revealed his animus in the choice of Benjamin Stark. The appointment was received with disappointment, disgust and anger. The Statesman declared Stark to be "a secessionist of the rankest dye and the craziest professions—a traitor as infamous as any that disgraces Northern soil. He has enjoyed the credit

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<sup>1</sup> Union, June 8.

of a letter written several years ago, raising the idea of a Pacific Republic and has ever since claimed to be the representative of this scheme."<sup>1</sup> The Oregonian asserted that the citizens of Oregon had been wronged beyond measure, but thanked God the state would have to submit but a few months to the degradation.<sup>2</sup> Actual extracts were published of vituperative and treasonable utterances of Stark.<sup>3</sup> In announcing his departure the Argus said:<sup>4</sup> "It is indeed a humiliating position occupied by our state, three-fourths<sup>5</sup> of which are loyal, to be represented in the United States senate by a blatant little peppery sympathizer with treason." A mass meeting was held at Salem at which Whiteaker's appointment was denounced<sup>6</sup> and the appointee charged with treason. The leaders in the meeting were loyal Democrats of prominence, such as R. P. Boise, Lucien Heath, J. C. Peebles, C. N. Terry and Harvey Gordon. Sufficient opposition was aroused to delay Stark's being seated by the Senate until in February, 1862.<sup>7</sup>

Encouraged by Southern victories, as time passed on, the Oregon secessionists became bolder in expression and more active in demonstrations against the Government. Before the end of 1861, the Oregonian announced the existence of the Knights of the Golden Circle in Oregon.<sup>8</sup> After sketching the movement in the Eastern States and its purposes, the editor declared that many of the leaders among those in Oregon opposing and denouncing the Government, were Knights of the Golden Circle. The opposition press made light of this and similar charges, but the denials failed to carry conviction, especially in the light of later disclosures. The secession papers be-

<sup>1</sup> Statesman, Nov. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Oregonian, Nov. 9.

<sup>3</sup> Oregonian, Nov. 30.

<sup>4</sup> Argus, Nov. 23.

<sup>5</sup> Nine-tenths were loyal in May, according to Adams!

<sup>6</sup> A thrust, evidently at Judge Deady, was given in the statement—"We hold Gov. Whiteaker less responsible than the judicial functionary in whose hands the Executive is as clay in the hands of the potter."

<sup>7</sup> When Stark's credentials were presented to the Senate, papers from Oregon citizens protesting his disloyalty were also submitted. All were referred to the Judiciary Committee, which on Feb. 7, reported in favor of seating him, Senator Lyman Trumbull presenting a minority report. The majority report was adopted. At the same time, Stark asked for a full investigation of the charges made. The committee appointed reported the charges substantiated and action was brought for a recommitment of the case, but failed.

<sup>8</sup> Oregonian, Nov. 9, 1861.

came so offensively treasonable in expression, that early in 1862 the Government began the suppression of the worst of them. The Albany Democrat, the first to be suppressed, referred to Confederate leaders as "the glory of the land" and to the Union soldiers as "the enemy." The Corvallis Union called the Northern soldiers "white niggers," and continually referred to Lincoln as a usurper and perjured tyrant. It reproduced a long article from the London Times, arguing in favor of a separation of the Union. The Portland Advertiser, "the poor, sniveling, secession sheet," according to Parson Adams, reprinted approvingly an article from the London Herald ridiculing President Lincoln and lauding President Davis.<sup>1</sup> A much quoted expression from the Advertiser was this: "We have every reason to invoke the Divine interposition to stay the hand of Lincoln, paralyze his efforts and thus put a stop to the unnatural, intestine war that he has inaugurated and carried on."

There appeared in the Oregonian of October 19, 1861, a long letter from Jesse Applegate on the situation in Oregon. He stated that after having traveled extensively through the state during the summer and fall he was forced to the conclusion that there were many disunionists in "this young Oregon, which, scarcely out of the shell of Territorial pupilage, stinks with an element foul and corrupt, bordering, I may at least safely say, on actual treason, whose rankness 'smells to heaven'." He asserted that almost anywhere, toryism was disgustingly common; that inquiry among a certain class would bring protestation that they were all Union men—the kind that got their Union from the Corvallis printing office." He pointed out that the old school, party hidebound Democrats, would read only that to which they had been schooled and accustomed. The Democratic party had so long been dominated by the pro-slavery element that they had learned to feed on what reeked with slavery and secession. Hence they naturally clung to the Corvallis Union, Albany Democrat and Portland Ad-

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<sup>1</sup> See Argus, March 1, March 22.



vertiser, in preference to the Salem Statesman, Portland Times and Jacksonville Sentinel, and their ideas of the national crisis were shaped accordingly. Applegate gave a striking picture of conditions as he observed them. Demonstrating as it does so forcibly what an influence was exerted by these unconfessed secession papers, extracts of this letter, written by a man of such standing and influence, are here reproduced at some length:

"If you would obtain a correct idea of the universal influence of the press, go among the people at large and behold the thirst for newspaper reading. As you pass along the road in hot summer weather, when the farmer has returned from his work and the doors are thrown open to invite the precious breeze, on the porch or just within you will see the man of the house with his paper, swallowing down the editorial as a more delicious morsel than the viands preparing for his dinner. If he is a Democrat of the Jo Lane school, it is the Corvallis Union, the Advertiser or some paper of that character, upon which he feeds; and whatever he finds in its sound columns, if not there condemned, whether murder, rebellion or treason, it is Democratic and good enough for him. Go into his house, and upon a table, packed away in a shelf or perhaps spread upon the wall, you will find the source of his political information and faith in a formidable array of Advertisers, Oregon Democrats or something of that kind. Possibly a stray number of the Oregonian or Statesman may be found containing the President's message; if so, probably the conversation will turn upon the message and you will find in nine cases in ten that he has not read it, but merely what his paper said about it. 'I commenced to read it but got disgusted with the Hell-fired thing. I haven't got time to read such d——d abolition stuff and I thought if God would forgive me for commencin' to read sich trash, I'd not do so no more. I'm a Union man, but I don't go nothing on coercion. I think Lincoln's done more to destroy the Union than any other man. I think the abolitionists better mind their own business; and if they don't, I tell you the Southerners will larn um a lesson. Talk about Lincoln whippin' the South! the Northern men is all cowards.'"



During these early months of the great struggle—a period of uncertainty and confusion throughout the Union—the Statesman, more than any other Oregon paper, displayed the rare gift of the interpretation of events and of the character of the men intimately connected with them. Indeed the keenness of political insight displayed, in the light of the history of after years, seems almost to have approached the prophetic. In a long editorial, October 21, 1861, on "President Lincoln," it declared that he, almost alone of the great actors in the drama, was without any incentive to ordinary ambition; that he was President for four years embracing a period weightier with events than the seventy years of all his predecessors. "If he can pass through that period with respectable success, he will have laid up in the storehouse of history greater fame than either Jackson or Washington derived from the Presidential office. If he fails, the future will attribute it to his incapacity rather than the power of his adversaries and he will never be forgiven the crime of being born. Believing the perpetuation of the Union to be the sole object of the President, we desire to foster no sentiment adverse to the design." More striking examples of the political prescience of the Statesman were to follow as the struggle progressed. Such sentiments as these, coming from a source from which had formerly emanated the most violent strictures of the Black Republicans, tended toward making the Statesman the recognized champion of the Union cause in Oregon.

## Chapter XII

### THE UNION MOVEMENT IN 1862

Writing in the summer of 1861 upon the general political effects of the death of Stephen A. Douglas, Bush advised the followers of the fallen leader in Oregon as to the proper course of action to be pursued by them.<sup>1</sup> He referred to the fact that many Republicans and Democrats had pledged themselves in good faith to ignore party aspirations in the presence of the rebellion, but gave it as his opinion that as long as there were offices to be filled, party affiliations would not become extinct. Considering the fact that Bush had been in office steadily for a decade, he spoke as one having authority. Therefore, while acknowledging the general manifestation of a disposition to ignore the past and organize upon the basis of Union against disunion, he advised the Douglas men of Oregon to maintain their identity, holding it to be safer for them to hold themselves aloof as a reserve force in case disunion should be about to carry the day. He admitted that the plan of three adverse parties was a somewhat novel feature in politics and a rather difficult one to maintain, but he held it to be an eminently safe one against conspiracy and sudden revolution such as seceders meditated for Oregon and California. Bush then made this striking prediction—a further illustration of his political prescience: "When this contest, be it long or short, is closed, the men who have trained under the great political captain (Douglas) will find themselves the nucleus of a radical party, opposed to the federal element grown strong in the centralizing work of crushing out rebellion." Awaiting that time, he advised his fellow Democrats that they could serve the country better by independent action.

But within a few short months, the editor of the *Statesman* saw things very differently. As has been indicated, the radical Democrats were fervently appealing for party reorganization in the hope of gaining control of the state. Bush evidently became somewhat uneasy at the effect their overtures might

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<sup>1</sup> *Statesman*, June 24, 1861.

have. In September he wrote the Statesman from the East, whither he had gone: "I notice the secessionists of Oregon are anxious to 'reorganize the Democratic party'. I hope no honest man will put his foot into that pitfall. . . . What more occasion have we in Oregon for defunct political parties than they have in Kentucky or Missouri? Do you hear of Democrats, Republicans or Whigs there? They have two parties and but two—Union and disunion. Let us so divide in Oregon while this dreadful danger hangs over our common country." In its issue of December 2 the Statesman declared expressly for the formation of a Union party, uniting all the Union men of the state, as the only way to defeat treason. Oregon was declared to be stronger proportionately for secession than was Missouri. The need of united action on the part of Union men was therefore evident.

In September the Oregonian had expressed the conviction that party lines and party triumphs should be forgotten in the one great cause of saving the Union.<sup>1</sup> No suggestions were offered as to how the Union movement should be effected. The first definite suggestions made public for such are to be found in an unsigned article appearing in the Weekly Oregonian<sup>2</sup> of November 23, contributed by a resident of the southern part of the state. Immediate organization was urged in order to check the disloyal plans of the enemy. The plan of procedure suggested as the most practicable was the immediate formation of state central Union committees, with correspondence committees in and for every county. These committees were to ignore party lines absolutely. There should be no indecision in this respect, no matter who demurred or what his party prominence. It should be clearly understood that the integrity of the Union was not to be immolated at the shrine of any party. The committees were to distribute among the voters the speeches of such men as Holt, Dickinson and Everett and

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<sup>1</sup> Oregonian, Sep. 21, editorial, "The Duty of Patriots."

<sup>2</sup> The publication of the Oregonian as a daily paper began in February, 1861. Hereafter, however, as heretofore, the weekly edition is the one referred to unless otherwise specified.

other Union documents; also to labor with honest men likely to be controlled by old party associations, to get them to realize the enormity of the situation, with the disgrace which would result if they adhered to the false advice of pretended "Union but peace" men.

The Argus spoke, December 21 in a leader on the "Next June Election." That there should be united action on the part of those supporting the Administration, was freely admitted. It disapproved the idea held, as it said, by some Republicans that a full Republican ticket should be nominated without taking any steps toward securing the co-operation of the loyal portion of other political parties. However, it strongly objected to the plan of attempting to blend two parties, hitherto antagonistic and unrelentingly hostile on vital issues, into one party, upon a common platform. It declared that no bond of union would be strong enough to hold them together; that it would be building a structure that sooner or later must be torn down. It favored one of two plans: first, the nomination of a Union ticket by a state Republican convention; or, second, the holding of separate conventions by the Republicans and Union Democrats—these two conventions to confer together and agree upon a ticket satisfactory to all parties.

The partisan Republican attitude was clearly expressed in a letter to the Argus written by C. Hoel of Salem, dated December 20. It was directly in answer to the Statesman, which had said that it would willingly accord the Republicans a monopoly of the renown if it thought they they, single-handed, could best conserve the Union's existence. But it was not to be assumed, added the Statesman, that the Republican party would be able to do all the fighting, furnish all the means and do all the voting necessary to putting down the rebellion. Hoel replied that if the proposition to be inferred from this were true, the portion of the people carrying the elections would have to pay all the taxes. He aptly reminded the Statesman that when, during the last Indian War it had insisted that all military appointments should be confined to the Democrats, it

did not claim that the Democrats should furnish all the means for the war or even do all the fighting. It was bluntly intimated to the Statesman that the proposition that the minority is free from obligation to support the Government except upon the condition that it should rule the majority, was the doctrine of the secessionists. Hoel then addressed himself to his fellow Republicans. He told them that they had elected a President and that he himself intended to remain a Republican until traitors should learn that the success of an opposition party was not an excuse for rebellion. The Republicans, he said, had done nothing to make themselves odious. They were loyal, they were in the ascendancy in Oregon if any party was, and a due regard to their principles, their past labors for the good of the country, made without pay while others were growing fat in office, demanded that they have something to say as to the way and manner of forming a *new* Union party. The Republican party was declared already to be a Union party and Hoel asserted that if a new one was to be organized for the purpose of accommodating the prejudices of other Union men, and to divide the offices, he claimed as much right as the Statesman to say how it should be formed. He was for a Union arrangement, through the Republican convention, by conference or otherwise, but not for a direct Union party, in which politicians who had all to gain and nothing to lose, would come up as leaders.

Many Republicans had learned from past experience to be suspicious of overtures from Democratic sources looking toward coalition. They remembered that their party organization had long been obstructed and delayed in Oregon because of unnatural alliances with opposing factions. At last they had achieved that distinct party organization and it had proved its power. And now, just when the time had come to enjoy the spoils of victory so long hoped for, they were asked by their old opponents to cast off their political affiliations for the good of the country. It is hardly to be wondered at that the motives of those insisting on the scheme of a Union party were ques-



tioned by some. Since the death of Baker, the Republicans were again without a commanding leader and their fear was not unwarranted that Bush would make himself the power in the new organization that he had been in the old Democratic regime. This apprehension was clearly manifested in a private letter<sup>1</sup> from Dr. James McBride to D. W. Craig, now editor of the *Argus*.<sup>2</sup> McBride expressed his fear that the *Statesman* would secure the nomination on the Union ticket for state printer, in preference to Craig. "You are our dependence among the Republicans" wrote McBride, "and if you fail, all is lost. 'Tis not only a temporary loss, but a loss of principle—indeed all those valuable principles for which we have contended for years. And the *Statesman*, under the conduct of the 'Clique' as in days of yore, will merge the Union party into that shapeless thing called Douglas Democracy; will cringe and manage and fish for some modified Democratic and pro-slavery humbug, and finally, when Republicans won't bear it any longer, it will call for a 'reunion of the Democracy.' And so all the factions will unite again and leave us to reorganize and fight the battles over again. Ten years will not elapse before all this will be done if the *Statesman* is elected printer; perhaps not five. . . Stir up your friends with a red hot pitchfork. Write to W. L. [Adams] to be up and doing to save himself and Republicanism."

In view of the grave crisis confronting the country, the majority of the Republicans were inclined to allow the future of their party to take care of itself. They wanted united action now, and if it could be best secured in a Union party, they would acquiesce. The *Oregonian* indicated that the manner or plan of union was in the hands of Republican State Central Committee and promised to abide by the judgment and action of its members.<sup>3</sup>

In January a formal call was issued for the holding of a Union State Convention.<sup>4</sup> It was addressed to those who were

<sup>1</sup> February 16, 1862.

<sup>2</sup> Adams had been appointed collector of customs at Astoria by the new Administration.

<sup>3</sup> *Oregonian*, Jan. 14, 1862, Editorial, "The Demands of the Hour."

<sup>4</sup> See *Argus*, Jan. 18.



in favor of a vigorous prosecution of the war for the suppression of rebellion, who thought more of country than of party prejudice and who were willing to unite for the election of a ticket upon such a basis without reference to former political associations. All such voters were requested to meet in the several precincts of the various counties on March 22 to choose delegates to county conventions to be held March 29, which in turn would select delegates to a state convention to be held April 9 at Eugene, for the purpose of nominating a Union ticket for state officers and member of Congress. The apportionment of delegates for the various counties was given. The call was signed, first, by H. W. Corbett, E. D. Shattuck and W. C. Johnson, as the Republican State Central Committee; second, by Samuel Hanna, as chairman of the Democratic State Central Committee; third by forty-three more or less prominent members of the two parties, among whom were A. C. Gibbs, Alonzo Leland, John McCracken, W. S. Ladd, R. J. Ladd, S. G. Reed, David Powell, S. J. McCormick, A. L. Lovejoy, D. P. Thompson, R. P. Boise, C. N. Terry, Lucien Heath, B. F. Harding, J. R. McBride, Benj. Simpson, Jos. Magone, R. C. Geer, B. J. Pengra, E. N. Cooke, I. R. Moores.

There appeared, following the call, a statement to the Republicans of Oregon made by the state committee, explaining and defending its action in not calling a regular Republican convention as it had been instructed to do. The members of the committee disavowed the right or desire to dissolve the Republican organization or to recant any Republican principles. But being unwilling to do anything to distract the Union sentiment in the approaching canvass, they deemed it unwise to call a party convention with a view to the support of a distinctively Republican ticket. An appeal was made to the loyal people of the state, to Republicans especially, to support zealously the Union movement. In the same issue, the *Argus*, despite its objections to such a plan, came out in earnest support of the proposed action. In accordance with the call, notices of county Union conventions began to appear. They

were signed after the manner of the general call for the state—by the county central committees of both parties and then by a number of representative Republicans and Democrats.

The representation between the two parties at the Union state convention seemed to be pretty evenly distributed, but the Democrats figured rather more prominently in the choice of officials and in the various proceedings than the Republicans.<sup>1</sup> The ticket was nominated as follows: for Congressman, John R. McBride of Yamhill, a Republican; governor, Addison C. Gibbs of Multnomah, Democrat; secretary, Samuel E. May of Jackson, Republican; printer, Harvey Gordon of Marion, Democrat; and connected with the Statesman; treasurer, E. N. Cooke of Marion, Republican. The platform adopted consisted of a short series of ringing resolutions in support of a vigorous prosecution of the war and opposing any peace other than the honorable one sure to come “when rebels and their sympathizers submit to the constitutionally elected authorities of the Republic.”

As was to be expected, the nominations made by the convention were not wholly satisfactory. It was charged that McBride, a Republican, was nominated by Democratic votes and that Gibbs, Democrat, was placed on the ticket by Republicans in direct opposition to the wish of three-fourths of the Democrats.<sup>2</sup> Jesse Applegate, ultra-loyal, but irreconcilable as usual, wrote to a friend—“In obedience to a ‘higher law’ than that of conventions, I shall certainly strike the name of Mr. Gibbs from my ticket.”<sup>3</sup> The securing of the office of state printer by the Statesman was indicative of the fact that the Democratic side of the partnership was able to enforce its wishes in the division of the offices.<sup>4</sup> The Oregonian stated that it was sorry

<sup>1</sup> Proceedings, in Oregonian, April 19.

<sup>2</sup> Private letter: Jesse Applegate to M. P. Deady, April 13, 1862. “McBride is the representative of the Baker or rather office holders’ interests in the Republican party. He is an amiable man of fair character, but his talents, acquirements and force of character are not equal to the position. . . . But to him the objections are neither loud nor deep. . . . and the vote that will be given to him will fairly represent the strength of the fusion. Not so with the candidate for governor”, etc.

<sup>3</sup> Private letter: Jesse Applegate to M. P. Deady, April 13, 1862.

<sup>4</sup> In private conversation, Judge Williams said the Democrats got the best offices. He attributed the generosity of the Republicans to the fact that they wished to tempt the Democrats to stay in the Union organization and thus prevent the re-organization of the Oregon Democracy.

to observe a manifest disposition on the part of some who had professed themselves Union men, to discourage the Union ticket. It was intimated that a movement was on foot to put a People's Union ticket in the field, which was stigmatized as a covert attack on the loyal spirit of the state and designed alone to render assistance to the secession party, falsely styling themselves Democrats.<sup>1</sup>

Editor J. H. Slater of the Corvallis Union issued a call to the Democracy of the state to meet in convention at Corvallis, April 15. The invitation to participate was made to include all "who are opposed to the political policy of the present Administration and who are in favor of the establishment of the Union as it *was* and the supremacy of the Constitution as made by the Fathers of the Republic." The Argus charged that the use of the past tense of the verb in "was," was an acknowledgment that the Union had ceased to exist and was a recognition of secession.<sup>2</sup> The keynote of the whole obstruction policy of the Oregon Democracy as now constituted was given in the reference to the supremacy of the Constitution. That the Democratic call was largely signed and by many former Douglas Democrats who had refused to join the Union movement, is indicated in the following paragraph from the Argus of March 1: "Some are expressing surprise at the large number of names attached to the rebel call for a secession convention at Corvallis that were formerly of what were called the Douglas Democrats."

The following was the ticket nominated at Corvallis: for Congressman, A. E. Wait; governor, John F. Miller; printer, A. Noltner; secretary, Geo. T. Vining; treasurer, J. B. Greer. Of these men, Wait was the only one who had been considered as a Douglas Democrat and he was not distinctively so. The editor of the Dalles Mountaineer was a delegate to the convention and a participant in its proceedings. The characterization of the situation by him, which may be credited with

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<sup>1</sup> Oregonian, May 10.

<sup>2</sup> Argus, Feb. 15.

being comparatively unprejudiced, is enlightening.<sup>1</sup> He noted that, as in all such assemblages, two elements were at work—the one actuated by patriotic impulses, the other knowing no higher motive than a greedy thirst for the spoils. There was a third element, he continued, which was steadily kept in the background, but yet, such was its irrepressible character, that it would occasionally make itself manifest. “We will be understood as alluding to the Secessionists, the number of whom was decidedly large. This was shown in the vote for governor, state printer and in fact for every office outside of Congressman. . . . From the first it was apparent that the name of Judge Wait was to be used as a make-weight for the balance of the ticket.”

The platform adopted was a good illustration of how cleverly and plausibly a bad cause can be presented and of how real motives and animus may be sugar-coated. The sentiment of the immortal Jackson—“The Union must be preserved”—was declared to be the watchword that the Democracy of Oregon sent forth to animate the masses in the hour of their country’s peril, to rally for the supremacy of the Constitution, the perpetuity of the Union and the preservation of the rights of the States and of the people. All “Constitutional efforts” were advocated for the suppression of rebellion and restoration of the Union. In nearly every resolution, the sacred name of the Constitution was invoked as a rallying cry. Peaceable adjustment along “Constitutional and legal lines” was the demand made by the Democrats. In this platform, in 1862, the Republican Administration was charged not only with conducting the war for the emancipation of the Negroes, but also for their enfranchisement. The corrupt coalitions of “so-called Democrats and abolitionists,” which had resulted in placing sectional men in the councils of the Nation, were condemned.

The Union ticket was overwhelmingly successful in the June election, the majorities ranging from 3177, for McBride for Congressman to 4155 for Cooke for treasurer, these two Re-

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<sup>1</sup> Account reprinted in *Oregonian*, May 3.

publican members of the ticket receiving the lowest and highest vote, respectively. The Union candidates carried every county in the state with the exception of Josephine, which gave Miller a majority of 10 over Gibbs for governor. The Union legislative tickets were elected almost entire. As an illustration of how even the political extremists put away personal and political prejudices of the past and joined hands in support of the Union in 1862, the private correspondence between Jesse Applegate and Judge Deady presents striking evidence. Deady, so recently a radical, pro-slavery Democrat and a delegate to the Charleston Convention, voted for McBride and the state Union ticket. Applegate, uncompromising and radical Republican, relented<sup>1</sup> and voted the whole Union ticket.<sup>2</sup> The paean of victory sung by the Oregonian, June 7, is suggestive of the high tension of the campaign and is all the more significant, in that the language of the paper had been noticeably tempered after Dryer laid down the editorial pen. The fierce exultation of victory gave as full expression to the elemental passions as would have been displayed by the ancestral tribesmen of the writer in the forests of Germany.<sup>3</sup>

The somewhat tortuous history of the many edged Viva Voce ballot law was further indicated in this election. After the election of 1858, the Argus in denouncing the evils of the old British and Oregon Democratic method of voting, declared that owing to the length of the ticket, the polls were kept open in Oregon City until 12 o'clock at night and were then closed without recording the votes of numbers who had been waiting for hours for an opportunity to vote. The crowding, squeezing and jamming around the polls was declared to be excessive all day long.<sup>4</sup> For a radical change of view, note the

<sup>1</sup> Supra, p. 305.

<sup>2</sup> Applegate to Deady, June 8, 1862: "You are right, I did relent and voted the Union ticket straight. I did it upon neighbor Estes' principle. He said—'I do not like some of the Union candidates—in fact I hate some of them, but I hate the secessionists worse.'"

<sup>3</sup> "Rejoice ye sons of freedom. Let the Heavens resound. . . . Let the imps of secession hide their deformed heads in everlasting shame and disgrace. . . . Run and hide, ye diminutive emmets of disunion. . . . The day of your judgment has come. . . . In a word, you are 'dead and d—d.'"

<sup>4</sup> Argus, June 12, 1858.



following from the same source, following the Union ticket victory:<sup>1</sup> "The Viva Voce system, in spite of manifest imperfections, has once for all proved itself a good institution, and some in this state who helped forge the bolt, gnashed their teeth to see it so successfully turned against them, now that they are in a weak minority and an evil cause."

It was the business of the legislature which met in September to elect a United States senator to complete the term to which Col. Baker had been elected and in which Stark was temporarily serving by appointment. In the organization of the session, Dr. Wilson Bowlby, Republican, was elected president of the senate, and Joel Palmer, Union Democrat, speaker of the house. J. R. McBride at once introduced a set of strong resolutions proclaiming loyalty to the Union and defiance to traitors, which were unanimously adopted in both houses. One resolution denounced "the weak and wicked scheme of a Pacific Confederacy." Another asserted that the issues of the times demanded that patriots eschew partisan questions of the past and unite in support of the Government. There were but three members of the legislature who "bore the stain of secession or marks treasonable proclivities."<sup>2</sup> And of these, two were holdovers in the senate.

The inaugural address of Gibbs, Oregon's "war governor," was virile and to the point, breathing aggressive loyalty and a firm determination to support the National Executive in every way. In contrast to this was the expiring message of Whiteaker, extended, and marked by a doleful wail anent the wicked war, justifying the South in its point of view.<sup>3</sup>

Balloting for senator began September 11. The recognized leading candidates from the first were, B. F. Harding, member of the old Salem Clique, Judge Williams and Rev. Thos. H. Pearne, editor of the Pacific Christian Advocate. The first ballot stood: Harding, 7; Pearne, 9; Williams, 7; E. L. Applegate, 8; Orange Jacobs, 5; Whiteaker, 3 (representing

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., June 7, 1862.

<sup>2</sup> Oregonian, Sep. 13.

<sup>3</sup> Statesman, Sep. 15.



the above mentioned secession members,) with a few scattering votes.<sup>1</sup> The tenth ballot—Harding 12, Williams 12, Pearne 10, Jesse Applegate 10, scattering 5; the sixteenth—Harding 15, Jacobs 23, Williams 5, Whiteaker 3. This put Jacobs, a radical Republican, within three votes of the required majority. A motion to adjourn till the following day was carried by a majority of one, amid "considerable excitement." On the thirtieth ballot Harding was elected, receiving 28 votes. H. W. Corbett was his principal opponent at the last, representing the Republican element of the legislature. However, Harding received some Republican votes, including that of J. R. McBride.

In commenting upon the result, the *Oregonian*,<sup>2</sup> while claiming that Harding was not the choice of a large portion of the citizens, acknowledged that he was a good Union man, which was the only qualification necessary. In view of the fact that many Republicans claimed, that as a matter of courtesy the vacancy occasioned by Senator Baker's death should have been filled by a man of the same party, the *Oregonian* held that the election of Harding fully demonstrated the sincerity of the Republican members in their professions of love for the Union party, especially as they could have elected a radical member of their own party had they united for that purpose. The election was cheerfully acquiesced in by the *Argus*, without ifs or ands.<sup>3</sup> Dedy summed up the situation publicly as follows: "Between them (Harding, Williams and Pearne) there is not much political difference, each running as an unconditional Union man. Harding is of Salem and the other two from Portland and much of the real rivalry was between those places; and Salem, with the aid of her reliable friends, the surrounding 'cow counties,' as usual, triumphed."<sup>4</sup> Privately, Dedy said the election was a "steady-going, quiet affair," explaining that there were no wits nor wags in the assembly and

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<sup>1</sup> *Statesman*, Sep. 22.

<sup>2</sup> *Oregonian*, Sep. 20.

<sup>3</sup> *Argus*, Sep. 20.

<sup>4</sup> Correspondence, Sep. 15, to *San Francisco Bulletin*.

many of them were "God-fearing and prosy."<sup>1</sup> With two members of the Salem Clique now representing Oregon in the United States senate, the election tended to show further how the old organization Democrats were able to make patriotism profitable politically, while they were demanding that party lines be wholly obliterated for the purpose of saving the Union.

At the Union State Convention held in April, an executive committee of five consisting of Henry Failing, B. F. Harding, Hiram Smith, Geo. H. Williams and S. Heulat, had been appointed to manage the campaign, but no permanent party organization had been effected. On October 11 a meeting was held at the state house, attended by members of the legislature and other citizens for the purpose of effecting such organization.<sup>2</sup> A state central committee was appointed and a regular party organization known as the "Union Party" formally launched. Speeches were made by Senator-elect Harding, Gov. Gibbs, E. L. Applegate, R. P. Boise and J. R. McBride. Resolutions were passed strongly endorsing Lincoln's Administration. As will presently be shown, it was at just this time that Bush was beginning mildly to criticize the Administration he had so aggressively supported. In harmony with the critical attitude which he was preparing to assume, he deprecated and belittled this meeting, maintaining that permanent organization was ill-advised as no one could tell what new issues would arise by 1864, necessitating a realignment of parties. To those who knew Bush, the mere suggestion was a tacit announcement of a policy of opposition on the part of the Statesman.

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<sup>1</sup> Deady to Nesmith, Washington, D. C., Nov. 22.

Nesmith, College Hill, Ohio, to Deady, October 1: "The Telegraph has informed me of the election of Harding as my colleague. I would have preferred Bush but am perfectly satisfied with a result which I feared at one time would make me the colleague of the 'Holy Cobbler'." (Pearne.)

<sup>2</sup> Statesman, Oct. 20.

## AN ECHO OF THE CAMPAIGN OF SIXTY

*By* Lester Burrell Shippee

When, in July of 1861, the first and special session of the Thirty-seventh Congress assembled, pursuant to the call of President Lincoln, an eddy in the tumultuous current of national affairs formed about a contested seat in the lower House. Altho this episode was one of the minor incidents of that exciting period, the ripple in Washington, D. C., marked a raging whirlpool in political events on the Pacific Coast, and gave rise to an interesting constitutional question for the National House of Representatives to solve.

When the name of the Honorable A. J. Thayer was called,<sup>1</sup> as the Representative of Oregon, John A. McClernand, of Illinois stated that the name of Mr. Thayer had been improperly inserted in the roll, and that the name of the Honorable Geo. K. Sheil ought to be in its place. It appeared that Mr. Thayer had been elected in November of 1860, and that Mr. Sheil had been chosen in June of the same year; moreover, each appeared to be armed with a proper certificate. A resolution, denying to each of the contestants the right to the seat until the matter should have been passed on by the Committee on Elections, about to be appointed, was tabled and Mr. Thayer was seated.

The story, or at least the chapter immediately concerning the issue, has its location in Oregon, partly, and, in addition, is closely bound up with pregnant Presidential campaign of the year '60. Local politics and bossism, national aspirations and secessionism were elements of the situation that lay before the House for decision. In the young Commonwealth across the Rockies, party politics had been one of the first products of the fertile soil of the Willamette Valley. In fact, the political game as played here reminds one strongly of the bitter strife that marked the campaigns east of the Alleghanies

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<sup>1</sup> Cong. Globe, 1st. Sess., 37th. Cong., 9-10.

at the close of the eighteenth and the opening of the nineteenth centuries. The little weekly newspapers of Salem, Portland, Corvallis and The Dalles showed a virulence, a gall-steeped vehemence, that needed no Freneau as master in the art. At the storm center of this particular event were found General Joseph Lane, candidate, in 1860, for the vice-presidency on the ticket of the Southern wing of Democracy, together with his faction in Oregon, and, on the other hand, the "Salem Clique", a dictatorial political ring, the moving spirit of which was Asahel Bush, editor and owner of the *Oregon Statesman*.

For a decade, Asahel Bush had been the political arbiter of Oregon; he made and unmade fortunes; his approbation must be secured before a future of public life might be dreamed of; his opposition hounded a man to civic oblivion. During the Territorial period even Federal appointees were made to yield obedience or were practically forced to seek some more salubrious clime. With this power Joseph Lane had worked and won until the national convention of 1856; at that time a growing coolness had resulted in a dissolution of the alliance, and henceforth Bush and Lane were bitterest opponents. Nevertheless, so great had been Lane's personal popularity that when Oregon was admitted as a state he continued his already long career in Congress—as Territorial Delegate—by having the honor of being the first Senator selected. His choice for the lower House was also victorious, altho Lane was charged with "bribery and treachery the most foul and disgraceful"<sup>2</sup> in controlling the convention which nominated candidates. This was in 1859. Less than a year later, while the term of Lansing Stout, Member of Congress from Oregon, had still a year to run, the question of his successor was uppermost. It was evident that an election must take place sometime in the year 1860, in order that, when March 4, 1861, should end the 36th Congress, Oregon might be duly represented.

Early in February the *Oregon Weekly Union*,<sup>3</sup> of Corvallis,

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<sup>2</sup> *Statesman*, 5 June, 1860.

<sup>3</sup> Feb. 4, 1860.

the organ of Lane, entered upon a consideration of the legal date for the election. The Constitution of the State provided for biennial elections of state officials, to be held on the first Monday of June in the even numbered years. The schedule also stipulated that the first Representative to Congress should be selected at this time, in 1858. The *Union* held that, in the absence of any act by the Legislature making further provision, the contention advanced, to the effect that the Constitution of the United States precluded the fixing of the time by a state constitution, was purely captious. It therefore advised that the Democratic Convention nominate not only candidates for state offices but also a candidate to succeed Mr. Stout. The Convention, held at Eugene City on the 17th of April, was dominated by the Lane faction, and a Lane man, Mr. Sheil, was accordingly nominated.<sup>4</sup>

Such domination and such action had been foreseen by the astute editor of the *Statesman*, and accordingly the proper moral sentiment against the legality of an election of a member of Congress in June had been assiduously cultivated. In the issue of this sheet, next after the action of the convention, an editorial leader came out flatly on the topic:<sup>5</sup>

"The democracy here regard this project of electing a Congressman in June, without law or authority, as unwarranted and worse than unnecessary; as having been devised to further distract and debauch the democratic party, and defy the popular will. We have no doubt that in November an election of a Congressman will be held by authority of law, and then the democratic vote of Marion, Polk, Washington and other counties will be polled for a *Democrat*. And the man then elected will get the seat."

On election day, 5 June, the *Statesman* rounded out its campaign by a long leader<sup>6</sup> in which the downward course of democracy under the Lane blight was traced in detail. This series of perfidious acts culminated in the selection, at a con-

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<sup>4</sup> *Union*, 24 Apr., 1860.

<sup>5</sup> Apr., 1860.

<sup>6</sup> 5 June, 1860.

vention composed of little over one half of the counties and many delegates sanctioned by less than one half the democratic voters in the counties, of a candidate for Congress with neither intellectual endowments nor ordinary attainments to fit the position. Moreover, this man was "known to be odious on account of past political tergiversations to the democracy of the county where he resides, and almost unknown to any one outside of that county;" he was the tool of a corrupt and dishonest personal faction. Nevertheless this gentleman, after a heated campaign, and by close vote, managed to secure a majority of 76,<sup>7</sup> in a total poll of 12,909 over the Republican candidate, David Logan, altho the latter was supported not only by his own party, but by Know-nothings, Old Line Whigs, and many Democrats who were of the Douglas variety. It was charged,<sup>8</sup> before the election, that there was a well organized coalition of the republicans and the Bush (Douglas) democrats; in some counties an "Independent" ticket was put in the field, in others the republicans were so well satisfied with that of the Douglas democrats that they formed no slate of their own. These "strenuous, not to say unscrupulous efforts to . . . elect a speckled"<sup>9</sup> delegation to the State Legislature hinged more particularly about the impending choice of two United States Senators, for Joseph Lane, not yet the partner of Breckinridge on the Southern ticket, was using all his influence to secure the return both of himself and Delazon Smith. Apparently the Bush and "Salem Clique" democracy could look with equanimity on the choice of a Republican Representative in the lower House of Congress, if only the scalps of Joseph "Humbug" Lane and "Delusion" Smith might grace the walls of the sanctum of the *Statesman*.

Whether a reversal of a few votes on that June day would have changed the legal aspect of the matter can only be left to surmise. Standing as it did, however, Asahel Bush had a mission to teach, through the columns of his paper, some fun-

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<sup>7</sup> *Statesman*, 10 July, 1860.

<sup>8</sup> *Union*, 22 May, 1860.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 12 June, 1860.



damental facts about the times and circumstances of Congressional elections. Moreover, he who looks will probably find, for, early in July, <sup>10</sup> we learn that "the sentiment for an election of Congressman in November is more general than we supposed. In every part of the State the people appear to be in favor of it. Even some members of the Lane society admit that there was no authority for an election in June, and that a Representative ought to be elected in November by virtue of law." Mr. Bush had *not* voted,<sup>11</sup> as some evil minded men had stated, for there was no *election* in June. New light appears on the subject and it seems that the republicans made a blunder. The "Lane wire-pullers" counted—and correctly—on the usual lack of judgment on the part of the Republican leaders; they gave a color of legality to the election by putting a candidate in the field.<sup>12</sup> Besides, the main reason was not to secure a Congressman, but to gain strength to pull through the requisite number of legislators to secure the return to the Senate of Lane and Smith.

Already one of the chief hopes of the "Salem Clique" was fading, and right must win without the assistance of law. It had been expected that the State Legislature, controlled as it was by Republicans and Bush men, would enact a statute fixing the legal date for the election in November, at the time of the Presidential election. While a measure to this effect passed the lower House, in the September session of the legislature, it failed in the senate.<sup>13</sup> In spite of the fact that the desired law was not in existence after the adjournment of the June session of the legislature, and hoping for better results at the September session, what purported to be the Democratic State Central Committee met in the *Statesman* office and nominated Mr. A. J. Thayer<sup>14</sup> as candidate for Member of Congress from Oregon. This occurred in October just after the legislature had adjourned *sine die* without having made the desired pro-

<sup>10</sup> *Statesman*, 3 July, 1860.

<sup>11</sup> *Statesman*, 10 July, 860.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 14 Aug., 860.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 15 Oct., 1860.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 22 Oct., 1860.

vision by law. The next summer, while he made his contest for the seat in the House of Representatives, Mr. Sheil could point out that there had been no specific authority to this effect given the Central Committee by the extraordinary convention held in Eugene City in September.<sup>15</sup> Moreover, had there been authority to act, on the part of the committee, those who met in Salem, at Bush's office, assumed the right to speak for eleven members who were absent.

As the time for the Presidential election drew near it appears that the scheme for a new Congressional election had not taken especially well. The *Union*,<sup>16</sup> now vigorously campaigning for Breckinridge and Lane, together with the platform on which they were nominated, intimated in broad terms that the *Statesman* was the only newspaper of the state that had anything to do with this "bantling of no parentage." Since there was no authority by which the judges and clerks, at the coming election, might receive votes for Representative, it was quite proper that polls, independent of the constituted election machinery, should be opened in every town and village. Why even this formality? Why not let a certificate state that Mr. Thayer had been elected by a majority of one? Since the governor might be lacking in the sagacity requisite for him to see it his duty to certify to this election, why not save all the trouble and get a certificate from Bush?

In the poll, a weapon, devised by the Bush faction and used by it with deadly effect in rooting out Know-nothingism from its lair, some four years before, was now turned against the hand that shaped it. This was the *viva voce* voting law, whereby each elector must either state his choice aloud, or hand to the judges a paper from which the choice was read and checked up. Bitterly the *Statesman*<sup>17</sup> complained that, in many portions of the state, election officials refused to receive votes for Thayer, altho scores and hundreds were anxious to cast a vote against a disunion and secessionist candidate. "What do

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<sup>15</sup> Cong. Globe, 1st. Sess., 37th. Cong., 355.

<sup>16</sup> 3 Nov., 1860.

<sup>17</sup> 12 Nov., 1860.

the Lane desperadoes expect to accomplish by that high handed proceeding? If O'Sheil is weak enough to contest Thayer's seat (and he is weak enough to do nearly any foolish thing) Thayer can and will show the facts, and the unlawful things resorted to to prevent the people from voting for him." There would have been 8000 votes cast had not unprincipled and tyrannical officials barred them out.

As it was, Thayer received 4,099 votes.<sup>18</sup> That only the faction controlled from Salem considered that this was a real election, is shown by the fact that for Sheil there were but 131 votes, and all of these, with the exception of seven, were cast in one county. Logan had eight votes and Lane, five, probably from some deep sympathizers who were not satisfied merely by doing their best to have their favorite preside over the Senate of the United States.

"O'Sheil" was weak enough to contest Thayer's seat when the Thirty-seventh Congress organized; but, as has been noted above, Thayer was seated, and retained his seat till near the end of the extraordinary session. It was not until the 30th of July that Mr. H. L. Dawes reported, for the committee on elections, in regard to the case. It was a peculiar situation for a committee composed of Republicans in overwhelming majority—of the nine members of the committee, only one was from a slave-holding state, and four were from New England. The choice, providing either of the contestants should be seated, lay between a Lane man, in sympathy with secession principles, and a Douglas democrat who had scarcely a suspicion of legality in his claim to a seat. The committee, however, reported unanimously in favor of putting Mr. Sheil in place of the sitting contestant. Mr. Thayer was, naturally,<sup>19</sup> accorded the privilege of justifying his presence; and his defense smacked strongly of the doctrine that the *Statesman* had been impressing upon the electorate of Oregon the previous summer. He held that the Constitution of the

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<sup>18</sup> *Statesman*, 3 Dec., 1860.

<sup>19</sup> *Cong. Globe*, 1st. Sess., 37th. Cong., 352 seq.

United States directed that times, manner, and places of holding elections for Representatives should be fixed by the State Legislatures, unless Congress should act in the matter; no provision allowed these details to be fixed by a constitutional convention; besides, the section of the schedule of the Oregon constitution, on which the election of Sheil was predicated, was special and terminated with the first election. Again, the idea that a member of Congress should be elected eighteen months prior to the date of the opening of his term was ridiculous; political issues might have changed much in the meantime. If the contestant relied upon a section in the body of the state constitution, he could not find here authority for other than the general election of state officers, to be held biennially on the first Monday of June. If this section did provide for an election of Representative, then the legislature of Oregon clearly exceeded the constitutional bounds when it appointed an election for the 27th of June, 1859, at which time Lansing Stout had been elected.

(Note:—This election had been set in order that Oregon might not be unrepresented at the first session of the Thirty-sixth Congress; had the election been allowed to wait till the first Monday in June of 1860, the long session would have ended before the successful candidate could have gotten well on his way to Washington. La Fayette Grover, elected to Congress in June of 1858, sat for Oregon from the 14th of February, 1859, when the state was admitted, till the 4th of March.)

It was further claimed by the contestant that, under the Territorial statutes, which had not been modified, and which had been declared in force till repealed or changed, a delegate to Congress was elected in June, consequently a Representative should be chosen at this time. But, Mr. Thayer pointed out, the Territorial Legislature had modified the original law, and the election came in the odd numbered years; hence this was not consistent with the state constitution which fixed the general election for the even numbered years. The forms, provided for in the Territorial law, had not been conformed to in

connection with the issuance of Sheil's certificate. Finally, if the House should adopt the report of the committee, the people of Oregon would be as much at a loss as before regarding the interpretation of their fundamental law.

Mr. Sheil, in presenting his side of the case, held that these arguments were mere words; that the constitution of Oregon fixed the day for the election, and he had been duly elected on that day. Moreover, the method of the poll, by which the sitting member claimed to be elected, was of such a nature that it was ridiculous to consider him properly elected; 4,099 votes cast, when the vote for president totaled some 14,500, exposed the slightness of the claim. Again, the character of the certificate received by Thayer was such as to show that the civil authorities of the state did not look upon the election as legal; there was merely the statement that the sitting member had received so many votes as a candidate for Representative to Congress.

Thaddeus Stevens offered an amendment to the report of the Committee on Elections to the effect that neither of the gentlemen was entitled to the seat, and that it should be declared vacant. He held that the constitution of a state might fix the time for the Congressional election first held, but that all subsequent elections should be regulated by a legislative enactment; the United States Constitution fixes this, and no other power can change. Stevens was not so liberal in his interpretation of the word "legislature" as was the *Corvallis Union*, which held that the Constitution used this word in its broadest sense, that a constitutional convention was the legislative authority next in power to a direct vote of the people. Stevens' amendment was rejected, nevertheless, and the report of the committee adopted; thereupon Mr. Sheil took oath and was seated.

In the meantime out in Oregon, the "Salem Clique's" premature jubilation was equalled only by the scorn and invective which the Sheil adherents poured upon the heads of the leaders



in the National House.<sup>20</sup> When the news of the final disposition came, the *Union*<sup>21</sup> could adopt a tone of complaisant superiority; even "Lincoln's Rump Congress" could not retain Thayer. It was a bitter pill for the "Salem League", but it was "foiled at last," and the only consolation it would receive would be the sharing of the \$7,000 odd, out of which the United States Treasury would be cheated for salary and mileage for the defeated candidate.

The question finally arises—after it is admitted that Congress dodged the issue on the Constitutional point—as to why a Republican House should seat a disunionist rather than declare the seat vacant and allow a new election. It will be remembered that this was the critical period when it was felt that, altho the war might be a short one, it was safe to try to keep the wavering states still in the fold. The state in which Joseph Lane had been such an idol was one to be handled carefully, until it could be seen whether the would-be vice-president represented the true sentiment of his state, or whether Senator Baker was right when he said:<sup>22</sup> "There may be there some disaffected; there may be some few men there who would 'rather rule in hell than serve in heaven.' There are a few men there who have left the South for the good of the South; who are perverse, violent, destructive, revolutionary, and opposed to social order. A few, but a very few, thus formed and thus nurtured, in California and in Oregon, both persistently endeavor to create and maintain mischief; but the great portion of our population are loyal to the cause and in every chord of their hearts." That Senator Baker was right was shown amply before the war was over, but in the summer of 1861 the Republican leaders were, as a body, not willing to take chances.

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<sup>20</sup> *Union*, 5 Aug., 1861.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 12 Aug., 1861.

<sup>22</sup> *Cong. Globe*, 1st. Sess. 37th. Cong., 379.



## PRESERVATION OF INDIAN NAMES <sup>1</sup>

*By* Walter H. Abbott

The purpose of this Society as I understand it is the preservation of a record of past events. Such records in Oregon should cover a history of its discovery, exploration, settlement, and development. Due to the newspapers and various other publications this record is very fully kept as to present day happenings; hence a society such as this will find its chief field in the period before such means of daily records were established, and along the lines of happenings or enterprises which are not chronicled in the above mediums.

In every Western state the period, open to historical record, is very short. One or two generations measure the beginning of real settlement even though the discovery may have reached back a century or more. What is usually regarded as history, is, therefore, within the memory of many now living, and the collection of much of the historical material is easy and more valuable because of the fullness of information obtainable. It is to be hoped that this Society will take advantage of the present decade to leave the fullest possible records for succeeding generations so that the future may have full information from which it can draw its deductions from the experience of the past.

When, however, the Oregon historian reaches the limit of white occupation, exploration or discovery, he does not have to step off into botany, natural history or geology for all further information. Oregon was already teeming with human life. Man had been here for centuries. Who will tell us how long? The record which we now have is but the dust on the surface as compared with the events which have happened, and which possibly cry out at us in signs and marks yet to be deciphered.

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<sup>1</sup> Paper read before the Linn County Historical Society.

We know there were many tribes, several races, curious customs, innumerable traditions and many languages, all of which have received scant attention from the conqueror who disdained learning anything from the Indian.

The records left seem to civilized man meager, indeed. The white race, with its instinct for building, cannot comprehend a race that has no desire for permanent habitations or occupations. We are so delighted with our new found mastery of some of the natural powers that we cannot excuse the absence of them and have forgotten how to read the records of any other events than those commemorated by an exercise of these new powers. When we remember that nature leaves a complete record of her march onward, without recourse to any of these artificial helps, we then realize that the immense book of history of preceding ages is only closed because we do not know how to read, rather than because no record is left.

Of the records left, the mounds with their various skulls, implements, and structures have given an inkling of how to start the deciphering. The camping grounds, the oyster shell piles and the arrow heads and tomahawks give another point of departure. The traditions are of course actual history much distorted, but surely of great value and especially so for recent events.

The most valuable record left and the one which can probably be made the stepping stone for any extensive research is the various Indian languages. A complete study of all the dialects will probably give a thousand years of history and may point the way to that larger study of traces and markings which the future historian will be able to decipher as the geologist now deciphers the story of the rocks.

For the above purpose alone, possibly a record of books open to the philologist and the historian would be sufficient. We certainly cannot hope to use the Indian languages to form any considerable part of the language of the present day. It is, however, advantageous to have the Indian words enter into our daily life in some capacity, so that they may be

a living force and a sign board to all future generations pointing to the period in the development of the race, of which all that remains of a thousand years of human life, is words and a problem for students to decipher.

The above is the more necessary since there is a great need of extending our vocabulary to furnish words for the naming of towns.

Of the many defects of modern man, his poverty of words for geographical names seems to me one of the most pitiable. Of the three nations which have taken the lead in colonization and therefore in the giving of names to new territory, the English and Spanish seem to have suffered most from this lack. The Spanish took their list of saints and went through it again and again, repeating the same names over and over. The English never got beyond the limit of originality, resulting from the prefixing of the word new, to some worn out English name.

The colonists themselves could not mount to even these heights of fancy. For them and for ourselves,—their worthy descendants,—the wildest flights of imagination do not get above the stage of finding out some name used in Massachusetts, Connecticut or Virginia and then using it over and over again in each state and each territory. Think of 49 Albanys, 49 Salems, 49 Lebanons, 49 Brownsvilles. In fact only a stringent post office law prevented there being many towns in the same state with the same name.

For the geographical names, where there is no regulation and the genius of the race for repeating itself can find free rein, we have a remarkable condition. In the State of Oregon alone, reading from a small scale map, there was found 3 Bald Mts., 2 Silver Lakes, 2 Antelope Creeks, 3 Badger Creeks, 2 Burnt Rivers, 4 Camp Creeks, 2 Cottonwood Creeks, 2 Cow Creeks, 2 Deep Creeks, 3 Elk Creeks, 2 John Day Rivers, 2 Long Creeks, 2 Salmon Rivers, 5 Silver Creeks, and 3 Wolf Creeks. And this with most of the branches of the rivers not named. The state is still young, surely in a few

years it ought to be possible to have at least 10 Silver Creeks, that seeming to be the favorite.

Can any greater prostitution of an opportunity occur than to deliberately saddle a town or a river with a name already worn threadbare in dozens of other localities, when a vast store house of words rich in historical association and the growth of that particular section lies open for use? It is like choosing a corn tassel as the state emblem for Oregon, or a sunflower for Ireland in place of the shamrock. Surely the spirit which slaughtered millions of buffalo just to see them dead, and burned up half of the timber of the Northwest just to get pasture for cows, is abroad in other fields.

The disease then, is lack of imagination; lack of reverence of the past; ignorance; mental laziness. What is the remedy? None of the past methods such as the study of local history, the organization of historical societies, or the collecting and distributing of historical books will suffice. Clearly anything that will combat the above causes will help, but in the meantime the cities and villages will be named. We will have forty Lovers Leaps instead of only fifteen. Little Silver Creeks will come winding out of dozens and dozens of canyons. Wolf Creeks will run over the country in such numbers as to make it possibly unsafe to go out.

Of all of the above causes I believe the one which weighs heaviest with the present generation is lack of knowledge. The present generation is not prejudiced against the Indian as were their forefathers. Neither are they ashamed to hear their towns called by Indian names. We do not glory in the fact that we have not enough originality to make up a new name or in being the forty-ninth imitation of a poor original. But lacking it, we also lack the knowledge of what is available and appropriate.

If Indian words and therefore the Indian languages are to be preserved and at the same time the towns and rivers yet to be named are to have some originality, something of the spirit of the region in which they are situated, show in their

names, some concerted effort will have to be made by the historical societies while the country is still young. The purpose of this article is to point out a method by which this may be done without exciting too much opposition.

It certainly cannot be done by any public meetings or by trying to stir up the feelings of imagination of any community. The effort put forth by the Oregon Agricultural College to have Mt. Chintimini called by its right name and the small results show the futility of agitation in effecting this. Names are not made that way. They are made by some one arbitrarily putting a name on a signboard, or map, or rock. More names have been made by just putting them on a map than in any other way. How utterly different they would be if they were the result of the evolution of a community.

In any public meeting the Indian word even though it may have been the very name of that spot for 500 years will seem to Anglo-Saxon ears, impossible. Suppose some one should propose the word Massachusetts or Mississippi for the first time. They would be laughed to scorn. The words of any new language must first be written and must be read many times (before they are spoken) to be accepted. The greatest makers of names are the map-makers. Not, however, because they want to be such, but because they cannot help it. The map-maker will grasp at a good name, if you just suggest it to him, that is, of course for a new place not yet named. There are thousands of names yet to be given in Oregon. Why not preserve the glory of that which was instead of steeping ourselves in the imitation of an imitation.

As a practical plan for the introduction of new names, I would suggest the following: Every county engineer has a tracing on a moderately large scale of the county map; or if he has none one can be made up for a few dollars. Most of the high schools boys now learn to make such tracings. The historical society of each county should take up the map of its county and note the places where the names are either absent or not firmly fixed in the public mind. For instance many



rivers are still called, North Fork, South Fork, Middle Fork, South Fork of Middle Fork, and etc. These are excellent opportunities to change all but the name of the main stream. Most of the branch creeks have no very fixed names. They are known by the names given them in the map having the largest circulation. This condition, however, continues only so long as the population is scant. The names eventually become fixed.

From a list of the words of the language of the tribe which inhabited that particular region such words could be selected as seem most worthy of preservation and as having some association with the particular locality. In many cases the original name of a stream can be found; if this cannot be attached to the main stream it frequently can be to the branch. Sometimes, if it is uncertain whether a name can be changed, both names are advisable, the Indian name to follow the common English name. A name like an idea, once let loose on a map, may find a use that was least expected.

In addition to the streams there are many cross roads where it is pretty certain that a village will spring up. In fact, every cross roads, if in a fertile section with a couple of houses near should have a name. The historical society will have more prestige in giving it a name than any other body in the country.

A particularly good opportunity occurs when a new line of railway is built. The railway nearly always names the new towns and the writer's experience indicates that they are frequently at a loss for appropriate names. In no case would a list of names presented by a historical society be rejected without serious consideration and the adoption of some of them.

Most of the lesser mountain peaks have names that are not firmly fixed. If by a foot note it can be explained that the name used up to that time has already been appropriated in another part of the state, the new name will have a strong reason for soon gaining currency. All knobs and buttes should



be named even though they may not be high. Eventually they will be named so it behooves the Society to get there first.

After settling on as many names as possible the Society should arrange to blue print as many maps as possible and distribute them gratis to as many different people in the county as practicable and above all get them on sale at cost in all the localities where they could possibly be needed or where there is any likelihood of a sale of a map. Make good maps and sell them cheaper than anybody. All of the county societies should of course co-operate with the State Society, whose office should be to get out a state map introducing all the suggestions that seem feasible of the various county societies.

The passenger departments of the railway companies get out great numbers of state maps. They are also interested in preserving anything that will attract tourist travels. Indian names with the legends which go with many of them certainly appeal to the tourist. The adoption by the railway map makers of even a portion of the names suggested by the historical society would fix them definitely.

The automobile clubs are putting up signs in many places over the country. It would be wise to operate in conjunction with them. They will furnish the cost of the sign and frequently are only too glad to have some one interested locally who can give them information and cooperate with them in the protection of signs.

A simple sign will frequently change the name of a cross road that has another name for years. In a rocky county a man in an automobile with a can of paint can do much to fixing the names on the map as sent out by the society.

Mountain peaks and buttes should have the names cut into some rock wall near the summit. The carving of such name can often be made the excuse of delightful excursions which not only result in the name being cut into the rock but also newspaper attention, which furthers the fixing of the new name. If the county engineer happens to be an enthusiastic member of the historical society the plan of campaign as mapped out is

much easier of realization due to his detail knowledge of the various localities.

In many counties it is difficult to obtain a map. This should be the opportunity of the Historical Society. The maps which find the greatest sale or any form of distribution will determine the names in that section. Frequently some business house if solicited will print great numbers of county maps with their advertisement on the back and distribute them free.

The Society should print copious notes on the back of the map giving as many historical references as possible so as to excite the interest of each community in the Indian name if it is desired to change the name already partially fixed. The maps should, of course, be the latest that have been gotten out and new editions should be gotten out from time to time bringing them up to date if any changes have been made. The Society should also keep in touch with the great map printing houses furnishing them maps free. It is very easy in this way to become the authority for new names in the county and the opportunity frequently arises for changing a name that was regarded as fixed.

In other words the gist of this article is, that if we will make it easier for everybody to find out an Indian name for a locality than some other name, they will use the Indian name.

## THE GUN POWDER STORY

Editorial Notes by T. C. Elliott

There have appeared in various contributions—romantic and otherwise—to the literature of the Pacific Coast accounts of an occurrence at the mouth of the Walla Walla river participated in by the officer in charge of the Hudson's Bay Company trading post there, Fort Walla Walla, and the Indians, and termed the Gunpowder Story. Recently a narration of that story by the officer himself has become available in the form of a letter written to the late Elwood Evans in March, 1882, when Mr. Evans was gathering data for his contributions to the History of the Pacific Northwest, published 1889. The narrative shows a tendency to elaboration quite natural forty years after an event, but specifies names and family connections among Indians who were prominent in the first Indian War of Oregon and illustrates the high level of the relationship maintained between the traders of the Hudson's Bay Company and the Indians. It also contains a direct reference to the name "The White Head" as applied to Doctor McLoughlin.

The letter is drawn from the letter-book of its author, the late Mr. Archibald McKinlay, who was, in 1882, residing at Lac La Hache in British Columbia. Mr. McKinlay was a chief trader of the Hudson's Bay Company and afterward became a citizen of Oregon, residing at Oregon City from 1846 until about 1862. His certificate of marriage with the daughter of Peter Skene Ogden has been reproduced in fac simile in the Oregon Historical Quarterly (Vol. 10, p. 325, et seq.), but it was omitted there to state that the certificate was written in the hand of Mr. Ogden himself. This gunpowder incident must have taken place in the summer of 1843, for it was later than the promulgation of Dr. Elijah White's laws in December, 1842, and it was prior to the departure of Mr. Ogden on leave in the spring of 1844. The original Fort Walla Walla was burned in the fall of 1841. This same story as told on pp.

690-91 of Vol. 2 of History of Northwest Coast from MSS. dictated to Mr. Bancroft himself at Victoria in 1878, illustrates the Bancroft method of popularizing his text; for this volume of the series of Bancroft histories was written by Mr. Bancroft himself (see p. 52, Vol. 4, of this Quarterly).

Mr. Elwood Evans,  
Tacoma, Wash.

Dear Sir: I will now send you the gunpowder story in detail:

At Walla Walla it was the duty of the officer in charge to furnish horses, pack saddles and other equipment to all and every party requiring the same. All over the country from Utah to British Columbia: I had a man especially employed to make pack saddles. The only hard wood we could find for the purpose was Birch; this we got from the Blue Mountains at least fifty miles away. My saddles for the season were finished; however there was a quantity of saddle wood in the saddle maker's house. I happened to go in one day and found the saddle wood diminished in bulk. I remarked the same to the saddle maker; his reply was that both Indians and whites helped themselves to the wood & that he thought the wood was not required. I told him that if the wood was not required then it would be required in another year, to allow no person to take a stick of it. A few days after while busily employed writing the saddle maker opened my door and told me an Indian was taking a piece of the wood, that he had remonstrated with him & that he would not give it up. I asked my clerk Mr. Wm. Todd to go and see about it. In a few minutes after I heard some noise which induced me to go to the window; I saw an Indian rush out of the saddle maker's house, pick up a stone & before you could say Jack Robertson Todd was out grappling with him and happening to have two other Indians standing by they also got hold of Todd. I drove the two off, to give Todd fair play. The consequence was that altho. Todd's opponent was a stronger man than himself, he had thrown him down and

kicked him unmercifully. On separating them I inquired of them who his opponent was; he told me he was the son of Pio Pio Mox-Mox, the big chief of the Walla Walla (tribe). I blamed Todd for being so hasty and told him we would have some trouble. All the men except Todd, the saddle-maker and myself, were out in the fields about two miles away. However, I expected a big talk, but did not anticipate anything worse. About an hour after the old chief accompanied by some forty or sixty men came in by the back gate of the Fort through the kitchen into my room. On seeing him wishing to be polite I offered him a chair, instead of accepting the same he & his men flew by me to Todd and took hold of him; as soon as I could get among them I was in time to take hold of the chief's arm who had a tomahawk in his hand & was about bringing it down on Todd's head. I managed to draw him toward my desk where I had three pistols (not revolvers) hanging probably not loaded. As the chief and I were scuffling the men who had hold of Todd let go apparently to see what we were about to do. I handed one pistol to Todd, kept two for myself with the order not to fire till I give the word. The chief then presented his naked breast & asked me whether I was going to shoot him. "Shoot me. You shoot a man," said he. I replied such was by no means my wish, but if he again attempted to use his tomahawk on Todd's head I would certainly use my pistol. Then ensued a long conversation about Dr. White's laws, wherein if an Indian struck a white man he would be flogged & if a white man struck an Indian that he also would be flogged. I told the chief that I would not submit to anything of the kind, that if his son had thrashed my young man, I would have thought nothing more of it. He still insisted of having Todd flogged. I told him that they would have to kill me first. While thus talking the young man who had been thrashed by Todd gave me a severe blow from behind hitting me under the fifth rib. I took him by the hair of the head intending first to strike him, but knowing to do so would be sure death, I let him go & thinking of a keg of

powder in the adjoining room I sprung to the door, took hold of a flint & steel and defied them to touch Todd. Before I could think of what I was about there was not an Indian in the house except the old chief and his son; the former after sitting moodily for a few minutes addressed me thus, "Don't you think you are very smart to frighten my young men so? You can't frighten me. I have heard that you white people are in the habit of taking guns and challenging one another; let's you & I do the same." My reply was: "there are only six whites of us here and there are as many hundreds of you. Should you kill me there is no one to take my place as chief of the whites. Should I kill you there are plenty in your tribe as good if not better men than yourself." At this he went off in high dudgeon; sent messengers to the Cayuses & Nez Perces that his son was killed by the whites, & for two days Indians gathered round the Fort but none came inside the gate; something unusual. On the evening of the second day the Five Crows, a Cayuse Chief, an uncle of the young man who got the thrashing, a very old friend of the whites & a man who had a very great regard for me, came from a distance and entered the Fort without ever knowing anything of what occurred. I must here digress a little and mention that a few days previously Mr. Ogden had passed down taking my wife to Vancouver, so when the Five Crows came in I enquired whether he had heard the news, referring to my trouble with the Indians; his answer was that he had. "I have heard," he said, "that your father-in-law (Mr. Ogden) has lost two men by the upsetting of the boat at the Dalles." I told him that I had also heard of that accident but that I did not mean that, but my trouble with his brother-in-law, the Walla Walla chief. He wished to know the particulars. I told him that he would find out the trouble from the Indians as Indians considered the white men liars. On this he said: "did you ever know me to doubt your word or to go among Indians listening to their idle tattle?" I answered: "now as you have spoken, I will tell you," and of course repeated what had happened. He ex-



pressed himself sorry for what had happened, saying that it was a great disgrace for a chief's son to be thrashed. I explained to him that if my young man had got the worst of the fight I would think nothing of it & that they were both of them to blame; to this he said nothing but remained in the Fort all night alone attended by an Indian boy. Next morning he said he would send for the father, sent his boy accordingly. To my surprise he came to me saying, "My brother-in-law knows I am a peace maker & he will not come" (at this time they were not in speaking terms). Shortly the Five Crows went off saying that he might see his brother Tawato, head chief of the Cayuses, & would give my version of the story. At noon the same day, Tawato came to the Fort accompanied by Elijah, an elder Brother of the young man who got a thrashing, & a young man who had received a considerable smattering of English, reading & writing at the Methodist Institute at the Willamette. They were both cleanly dressed fully armed with guns, pistols & swords. This was in my opinion carried more for show than for violence. After being seated for some time without saying a word Tawato made known the object of his visit; it was if there was not a possibility of our coming to some arrangement of settling the difficulty. After explaining my case, he proposed to send for the father. The father accordingly came, accompanied at last by five or six hundred Indians, if I remember rightly they were not all armed. They filled the house, every nook & cranny of the fort yard crowded outside of the windows. Every available space was occupied by them. After Peo Peo Mox-Mox came in he & I agreed to explain our case to Tawato and to cut a long yarn short, Peo-Peo Mox-Mox told me he had nothing particular against me personally, but that I must send Mr. Todd out of the country immediately. I replied I would do nothing of the kind, that Todd had been sent to me by The White Head (McLoughlin) as my assistant, that he had not committed a fault, that I would not discharge him, that they had strength enough to kill us but our lives would be re-

venge, if his heart was not good toward Todd it could not be good toward me. Then he sprung from his seat beating his breast, saying "my heart will never be good," & rushing out of the door; a few minutes of a dead silence ensued. You might hear a pin drop. When Towato arose to his feet sternly addressing me, telling me that I was a fool, that I wanted blood & that I would get enough of it. Another term of silence ensued as impressive as the last lasting a few minutes; it was a critical time. Giving myself time to think I asked Tawato whether he was chief or not; he sneeringly answered, "ask my young men." I told him I knew that he was the son of a great chief, that his father was known among the early whites as a great and a good man, that no number of white men would make him through fear do wrong, that I was a chief, that notwithstanding the number that were standing around me would not make me change one iota of what I said. Then followed a murmuring sound as of a consultation in low tones which lasted for sometime. I observed the chief give an order that caused a young man to leave the room. Shortly after Peo Peo Mox-Mox entered the room and without any preface or ceremony came forward and offered me his hand in token of friendship. I looked with an expression of surprise and took his hand; then asked him whether his heart was good. He answered "yes," striking his breast. I then asked him whether his heart was good towards Todd; his reply was "yes & to prove it & wipe out all ill feeling for ever my son is coming with a horse as a present for Todd." To seal the compact I made the son a present of a suit of clothes and smoked the pipe of peace, a peace which lasted the whole time I remained with him. I have been more proud of the termination of this incident than the gunpowder plot for I believe I ought to give myself the credit (for it was so conceded by my Brother Officers) I had secured a lasting peace "with honor" to all concerned without any bloodshed, whereas if I had acted in anyways hasty or without forethought or firmness it would be hard for me to say what the consequences might have been.

You might think that I was devoid of forethought & ask why did I not shut the gates. In answer I had no gates; the old Fort was burnt down & I was building a new one."

## REVIEW

### ACQUISITION OF OREGON AND THE LONG SUPPRESSED EVIDENCE ABOUT MARCUS WHITMAN

*By* William I. Marshall, of Chicago

(Seattle: Lowman and Hanford Company, 1911. Volume I, pp. 450; Volume II, pp. 368)

Though many writers have essayed history of the acquisition period of Oregon, none has quite filled the need. More or less common is lack of scrutiny of "original sources" and of keen discernment of materials. Frequently, writers have based chronicles and conclusions on "facts" remembered long afterwards, not recorded at the event—often tinted with imagination or biased opinion of a later time.

Many "original sources" must yet be studied before a satisfactory history can be written of the large movements in discovery, exploration, settlements and acquisition of Oregon. Records of Hudson's Bay Company are yet to be opened and of the British Government: those of the United States Government are to be examined for fuller data and writings of its statesmen and diplomats; also of missionary organizations that contributed to early settlement. Much knowledge is to be gleaned from letters, diaries and journals of contemporary periods.

A book just published, "Acquisition of Oregon," written by the late William I. Marshall of Chicago (2 Vols., Lowman & Hanford Co., Seattle), delves farthest into first-hand materials of any history yet published of the pioneer period. The labor expended on this book by Professor Marshall was immense. His search into the issues of diplomacy over Oregon, through government archives and through diaries and letters of American diplomatists for the period 1814-46; his inquiry into records of the executive department and of Congress for that period; his study of letters and diaries of missionaries and pioneer immigrants between 1832 and 1846—all this makes the completest and most illuminating story of pioneer Oregon yet compiled.

There is opportunity for best literary skill in the tale of Oregon. World-wide currents affected discovery, exploration, settlement and title of this region. The story turns on the most important episodes of western progress. There is abundant room, too, for exercise of "philosophy of history."

The Marshall history possesses very high excellence. Its vigor betokens the energy and vigilance wherewith Marshall busied himself at the task during twenty-eight years. Its central purpose is to explode the Whitman myth. It succeeds admirably and fully. No reader of Marshall, no unbiased reader, hereafter can believe that myth. Few close investigators ever believed it. Every writer of Oregon history must go henceforth to Marshall, as he must go to Greenhow, else must undertake himself the vast labor of examining first-hand materials. The facts that Marshall cites are full and true. He distorts nothing.

Yet the Marshall work has faults. In demolishing the Whitman myth the author detracts unduly from the heroic character of the Wailatpu missionary, and from his very valuable participation in pioneer immigration and settlement. Marshall's continuous effort to reduce the importance of Whitman in the "saving" of Oregon leaves too little in the book for admiration of Whitman. Then, too, Marshall injects repeated doses of Whitman myth acrimony; he quarrels with authors of the myth after the manner of the half-century dispute over the question; he shows not enough of the even tenor of the true historian.

Also, Marshall asserts, as corollary of his argument, that Oregon would have been saved had the pioneer Whitman never been born, that Oregon would have been won to the United States from Great Britain without the advent of any of the pioneer parties. This broad assertion—that of occupation of Oregon by American pioneers played no part whatever in establishing the United States title—cannot be reconciled with the political spirit of the nation between 1840 and 1846, which drove thousands of American citizens to this region and de-

manded its possession even to the line of "fifty-four-forty-or-fight."

However, this criticism is of Marshall's conclusions, not of his facts. There they are for the reader to judge. Marshall asks no person to accept his conclusions.

But for Marshall's untimely death in 1906, undoubtedly he would have improved this crowning work of his life; perhaps revised some of his conclusions; probably given his book finer literary arrangement; certainly fixed himself more firmly as a foremost authority on Oregon history, as he is the very first authority on the Whitman legend. It will not be necessary for anybody else to disprove that legend.

Only 200 copies of the book have been printed. This has been accomplished through contribution of money by some twelve residents of Oregon and Washington, who saw the need of bringing to fruition the life work of Professor Marshall. This effort, headed by C. B. Bagley of Seattle, has been entirely successful.

*Whitman Needs No False Glory.*

Dr. Marcus Whitman needs no false glory; nor does the missionary cause which did great things for Oregon; neither does Whitman College—an ever growing monument to this patriot hero. Dr. Whitman will be an everlasting figure in Oregon annals; always will be honored by the gratitude of our people. But he was but one character among many, though indeed a foremost one, in occupation of Oregon. He did his duty as missionary, pioneer, citizen, and died a martyr's death at the hand of the savage. He did not "save Oregon," that is, he alone did not.

In company with other Americans, Whitman carried the claims of his country to this region, and with them won Oregon from the British. Occupation of Oregon and consequent possession by the United States belongs to no one man, but to many. Jason Lee and his associates, who settled in the Willamette Valley in the critical time are equal in honor to Whitman. Before these pioneers, and contemporaneous with



them, our diplomatists and statesmen did their part in saving Oregon: Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, John Quincy Adams, Henry Clay, Richard Rush, Daniel Webster. And before them were others deserving of honor, American explorers—Captain Gray, Lewis and Clark, the Astors, Wyeth. And the thousands of Whitman's contemporary pioneers, who settled in Oregon up to 1846 played a vital part in the acquisition of Oregon.

The journey of Whitman from his mission, near Walla Walla, to Boston, much of it in the dead of winter, 1842-43, is a fact of history. But much fiction has fastened to the story. Details of the fiction came into existence many years after Whitman's death in 1847. Imagination supplied adornments to the tale one after another. Marshall disproves them all.

The legend tells of two Flathead Indians, who had made their way to St. Louis about 1831, and had been refused the "Book of Heaven" by Governor William Clark, after having been offered unsatisfying forms of Catholic worship. It narrates that Whitman, responding to this Indian call, and spending six years (1836-42) as missionary near these Indians in what is now Eastern Washington, discovered the British and the Hudson's Bay Company, with Catholic aid, taking possession of Oregon. It represents Whitman finally determining (1842) to make for Washington, D. C., press upon President Tyler and Secretary of State Webster, who were then treating with Britain concerning the Canadian boundary, the claims of the United States and the value of Oregon, and lead back a large immigration to possess Oregon. The legend pictures Whitman spurred to this feat by a party of British traders holding feast at Walla Walla in the autumn of 1842 and exulting that Britain had won the country. It takes Whitman before President Tyler and Secretary Webster, whom he found ready to trade Oregon for a cod fishery off Newfoundland. It puts into the mouth of Webster that Oregon was a "worthless area."

It portrays Whitman exacting a promise from the President and his Secretary to delay negotiations with Great Britain



until he should lead to Oregon the large pioneer train of 1843. It pictures Whitman making speeches and publishing pamphlets on Oregon, endeavoring in every way to electrify the country and to induce immigrants to Oregon in 1843. It details him as a Moses leading the party of pioneers to Oregon that year, and as being its indispensable overseer. It tells of the officers of the British Hudson's Bay Company at Fort Hall barring the way to the pioneer train, and trying to stop its wagons, and of Whitman's resolution in taking the party by the British, wagons and all, to the Columbia River. It represents the success of the wagon immigration and the opening of the mission; none in the archives of the missionary board in Bos-wagon route as achievements of Whitman. It avers that this wagon road thus opened was the means of saving Oregon by American pioneers.

Wonder grows, in analyzing this romance, that in these days of enlightenment, of writing and printing, this story could grow to such absurd proportions and to so many fiction details; that it could gain such wide credence.

#### *Corroboration Is Lacking.*

No corroboration of any of these foregoing details of the myth can be found in contemporaneous writings, none in letters of Whitman or of Mrs. Whitman or of any member of his ton that sent Whitman to Oregon in 1836; none in the archives of the Government or in the letters of Tyler or Webster; none in religious publications of newspapers of the time; none in letters and diaries of leaders of the 1843 immigration, among them P. H. Burnett, Jesse and Lindsay Applegate, J. M. Shively, J. W. Nesmith, Almorán Hill—well known Oregon pioneers, all of whom have denied the Whitman myth.

All this disproof is fully detailed by Professor Marshall in manner completely convincing. And every person to whom Professor Marshall submitted his manuscript was convinced by what he says, except Dr. W. A. Mowry, one of the Whitman myth authors.

Several score persons read Marshall's manuscript, including historians of national and international reputation, professors of history in universities and colleges, teachers of history in normal schools, high schools and academies, principals of schools, judges, clergymen, lawyers, editors and public officers of various kinds—most of whom had been believers in the Whitman-saved-Oregon story and had indorsed it in lectures or sermons or in newspapers and magazine articles, or in their school and other histories, and therefore very naturally would have preferred not to have it proved false and who subjected all criticism of such evidence adverse to it to the most careful, and some of them to the most hostile scrutiny.

Among these critics Professor Marshall names: George Bancroft, John Fiske, Horace E. Scudder (who was editor of Barrow's "Oregon"), Professors John B. McMaster, of the University of Pennsylvania, Francis N. Thorpe, Harry Pratt Judson, of the University of Chicago; Andrew McLaughlin, formerly of the University of Michigan; Edward Channing, of Harvard University; Allen C. Thomas, of Haverford College; William P. Cordy, superintendent of schools, Springfield, Mass., and "many others."

### *Just What Whitman Did.*

Then what truth lies behind the legend and why did Whitman make his famous midwinter "ride?"

Quarrels and dissensions and failure to make progress on the part of Whitman and his associates had caused the American board of foreign missions (Congregational, Presbyterian and Dutch Reformed) to order discontinuance of three of the four mission stations, including Whitman's, and return home of two of the missionaries. Whitman and his associates deemed this order fatal to their mission work, and they decided it expedient for Whitman to return to Boston to secure annulment of the order and a reinforcement of clergymen and laymen for whom they had been importuning the board. Whitman was successful in securing annulment of the order at Bos-

ton, where he arrived on March 30, 1843, having left Wailatpu October 3, 1842.

This midwinter journey was a feat of rare courage and hardihood. But it had no political influence in affairs of Oregon. It had no political purpose. There is no evidence that Whitman interviewed President Tyler or Secretary Webster. Congress adjourned March 4, 1843, when Whitman was at or near St. Louis, eastbound, just emerging from the frontier, and he did not reach Washington for more than a month afterwards. There was no disposition to sacrifice Oregon either on the part of the President or of Congress then adjourned.

Congress at its session recently ended had received the report of Lieutenant Wilkes, more fully describing Oregon than Whitman could do, and was fully alive to the Oregon situation. Secretary Webster, through Senator Choate, had announced January 18, 1843, in the Senate that the Secretary of State never had made or entertained a proposition to admit of any boundary line south of the forty-ninth parallel (the present boundary fixed in 1846) in negotiations with Ashburton, British plenipotentiary, in 1842, with whom it was alleged Webster was negotiating to trade Oregon north of the Columbia River for a cod fishery.

Nor did Whitman make any speeches nor publish pamphlets to arouse the spirit of immigration to Oregon. That spirit was already fully aroused, and the 1843 party assembled near Independence, Mo., May 20, 1843, with little or no knowledge of Whitman's presence in the East, nor did Whitman join them until several days later. On the journey his counsel and services as physician were valuable, yet not indispensable, and his utility as guide was small.

At Fort Hall the Hudson's Bay Company men made no effort to stay the wagons nor, if its men had tried, would they have succeeded, since the party was fully equipped to go through. Besides, three wagons had gone through in 1840, those of J. L. Meek, Robert Newell, Caleb Wilkins and Fred-

eric Ermatinger, British chief trader at Fort Hall. This party was outfitted at the British post and one of its wagons was owned by Ermatinger.

This, remarks Marshall, "reduces to senseless drivel all the scores of pages in Barrows, Nixon, Craighead, Mowry, and the other advocates of the 'Whitman-Saved-Oregon' story, which accuses the Hudson's Bay Company of opposing the passage of wagons beyond Fort Hall."

After leaving Fort Boise, Whitman, together with a number of the younger men put off ahead and were of no service whatever to the wagon party in crossing the Blue Mountains.

All this and much more is substantiated by testimony that is conclusive. Scores of American explorers and pioneers are quoted to show that Hudson's Bay Company did not oppose their going to Oregon, nor their hauling wagons thither. The evidence of Whitman's own writings and those of his wife and his associates shows plainly that his "ride" had no political purpose bearing on Oregon. This and similar evidence from original sources, never before published, is contained throughout the book.

Marshall shows the first animus of the legend to have been a desire to obtain from the Government \$30,000 or \$40,000 indemnity for Indian destruction of the mission, through representations that the missionary work, especially Whitman's, had won Oregon from the British and that the Government had failed to protect Whitman's station. When these representations were made in the '60s, there was keen hostility towards Britain in the United States on account of Civil War matters.

Much new information is presented by Marshall of diplomacy on Oregon between the restoration of Astoria after the war of 1812 and the final boundary treaty of 1846. This information shows that the United States from the very first held out for the forty-ninth parallel, never wavered from that line, never would accept south of that parallel, and finally secured it through President Polk and Secretary of State Buchanan.

This line was proposed in 1818 by President Monroe and Secretary of State John Quincy Adams, when the treaty of joint occupation was negotiated, as an offset to the British offer of the Columbia River as a boundary. Monroe, as Secretary of State under Madison, and Adams, as one of the peace commissioners, had secured restoration of Astoria in the treaty of 1814 with Britain.

In 1823-24 Secretary Adams renewed the proposal of the forty-ninth parallel to the British Government but the latter again declined. In the negotiations Secretary Adams announced the Monroe doctrine through Henry Middleton, then American Minister to Russia, and Richard Rush, then Minister to Great Britain.

*Monroe Doctrine First Applied.*

It is interesting to note that the Monroe doctrine—now an axiom of American diplomacy—was first announced in negotiations with Britain and Russia concerning Oregon. It was intended as a warning to Russia colonization schemes in America and was supported by Britain. Also it was a warning, backed by Britain, to the holy alliance—France, Prussia, Austria, Russia—which planned to restore to Spain its lost American colonies.

The British then declined, however, the forty-ninth parallel, but in 1824 offered the forty-ninth parallel to the Columbia and thence that river to the Pacific. This Mr. Rush declined and again proposed the forty-ninth parallel to the ocean. Thus the British virtually conceded south of the Columbia. In 1826, Adams, then President, instructed Albert Gallatin, plenipotentiary negotiating with Britain the renewal of the 1818 joint treaty, that the forty-ninth parallel was our "ultimatum." From this "ultimatum" of Adams the American Government never receded. Webster's refusal to accept the Columbia River as boundary in 1842 in negotiations with Ashburton caused delay in the settlement until 1846.

These negotiations, not before fully examined as to their bearing on the Oregon boundary, convinced Professor Mar-



shall that the Oregon question between the United States and Great Britain was one of diplomacy and not one of settlement and occupation. It is not probable, however, that Professor Marshall will be sustained in this view. Large influx of American settlers into Oregon, prior to 1846, undoubtedly alarmed Great Britain and finally induced its Government to accede to the American "ultimatum" of John Quincy Adams of 1826. But Marshall clearly shows that Whitman could have had no influence on the diplomacy of the question.

Important also is Professor Marshall's proof that the wagon road to Oregon was not Whitman's opening. Three wagons reached the Columbia River from Fort Hall in 1840—three years before the large wagon party which he is alleged to have guided through in 1843.

Besides, the route to the Columbia was really laid out by fur traders. Marshall finds that certainly 1000 Americans had crossed the Rocky Mountains before Whitman in 1836, probably 2000. On Whitman's first journey across in 1836 he was guided by American traders to Green River, and by Hudson's Bay men, thence to Fort Hall, and the Columbia River. All the passes through the mountains to the Columbia, and the river routes, had been explored before Whitman's advent, and he followed the beaten path of the fur traders. The wagons of traders, explorers and settlers followed these trails of the fur traders. It was well known that wagons could go through to the Columbia before Whitman's journeys of 1836 and 1843, and that the only requisites were sufficient equipment and men for the enterprise. The wagons that did go through to the Columbia in 1840 and 1843 owed nothing to Whitman for the feat.

This review and criticism of the Marshall work, though somewhat extended, touches only briefly the main features of the book. The investigation is one long needed. The Whitman myth has distorted the truth during half a century, and it is time now to accord Dr. Whitman his due as patriot and hero of Oregon, but not as savior of this region.

LESLIE M. SCOTT.



## NOTES

Through the exercise of fine historic sense and activity Baker is preparing for a fitting observance of the centennial anniversary of the passing of the main division of the Hunt overland expedition through that section in the winter of 1811-1812. It will be remembered that Wilson Price Hunt was the leader of that part of the Astor expedition to the mouth of the Columbia that proceeded across the continent.

The suggestion of Mr. Walter H. Abbott for the preservation of Indian names of natural features and of localities should elicit some response. Many undesirable geographical names should be discarded. Important natural features and developing population centers are still to receive their designations. Mr. Abbott reveals a fine opening for the activity of historical societies and suggests effective modes of procedure.

An analysis of the census bulletin on population of Oregon discloses some interesting facts. The growth of the State during the last decade amounted to an increase of 62.7 per cent, a nearly two-thirds addition in numbers. During the same period the United States as a whole added 21 per cent. Oregon grew nearly twice as rapidly in the decade from 1900 to 1910 as it did from 1890 to 1900. The gain was 259,229, making a total population in 1910 of 672,765. The largest growth in any preceding decade was from 1880 to 1890, when 142,936 comprised the gain. The increase during the last decade was as great, very nearly, as one and a half times the entire population of the State in 1880.

Portland with its 207,214 people lacked about 20,000 of having one-third of the population of the state as a whole. Salem was the second city with 14,094; Astoria was third with 9,599; Eugene with 9,009 was a close fourth. Medford had the highest percentage of increase, 393.6 per cent; Salem's was 231; Eugene's, 178.4.

The urban population as a whole—that of the cities and incorporated towns of 2,500 inhabitants or more—numbered

307,060, or 45.6 per cent of the total population of the State; while 365,705 people, or 54.4 per cent, lived in rural territory—on the farms or in villages, towns and cities of less than 2,500. In 1900 only 32.2 per cent of the Oregon population was urban, while 67.8 per cent lived in rural territory. There had thus during the decade from 1900 to 1910 been a large increase in the proportion of urban population. The urban population of the nation at large was 46.3 per cent. During the last decade the urban population of Oregon grew 115 per cent; the rural population during the same period increased but 35.1 per cent. In other words, the population of the urban areas in Oregon increased more than three times as fast as did that of the rural territory. The City of Portland grew somewhat more than twice as rapidly as did the State as a whole. The average density of the population in Oregon was seven persons to the square mile. The average number for the nation as a whole was 30.9. Three counties, Harney, Lake and Malheur, each averaged less than one person per square mile. The rural population in Union County, and the population as a whole of Grant County, decreased during the decade.

Maps indicating density of population show a great south-eastern block of the area of the State that was virtually empty. This wilderness region comprised nearly half of the extent of the State. A tier,—in some places two,—of counties along the northern and western sides of the State were a little more fully occupied. So far that section of the State which first drew the pioneer across the continental wilderness of the forties and fifties still leads in inhabitants. But the conquering forces in irrigation and railway building are at work. The maps of the returns of the next national count promise to be different—at least the vast vacant area will have vanished.

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